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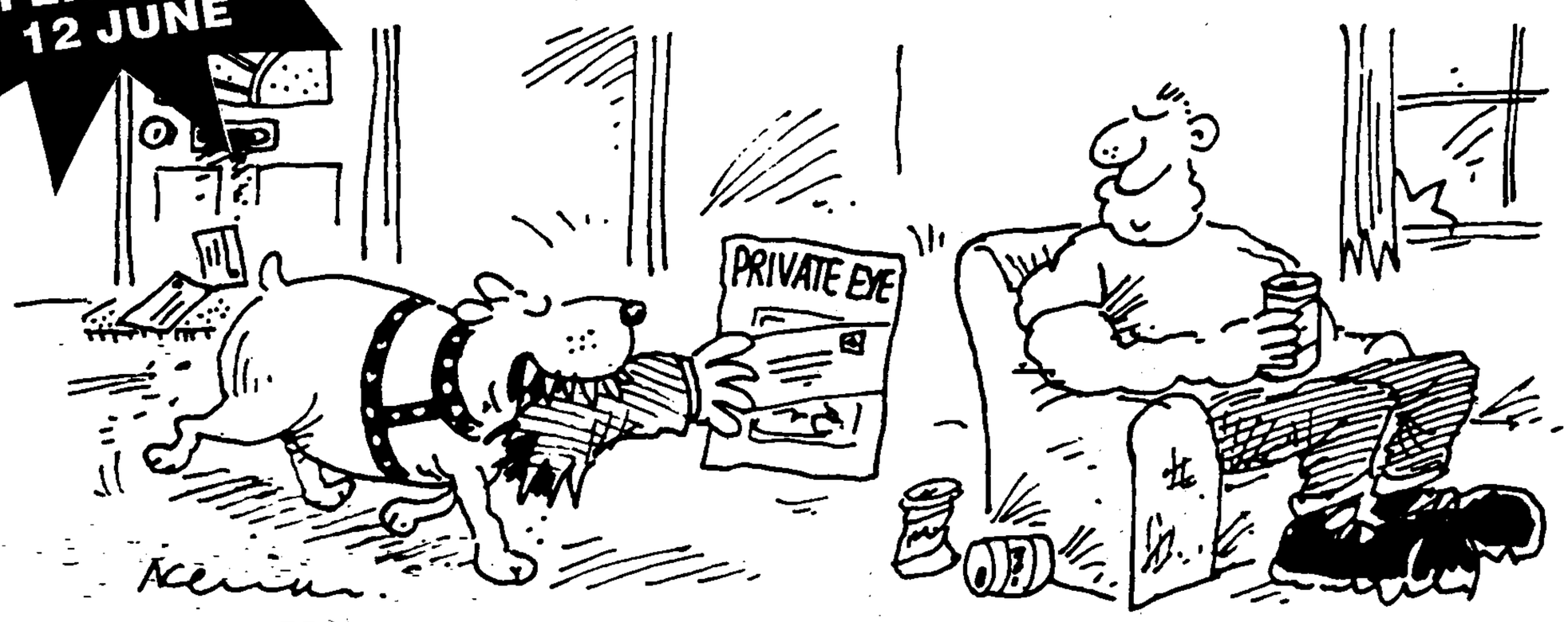

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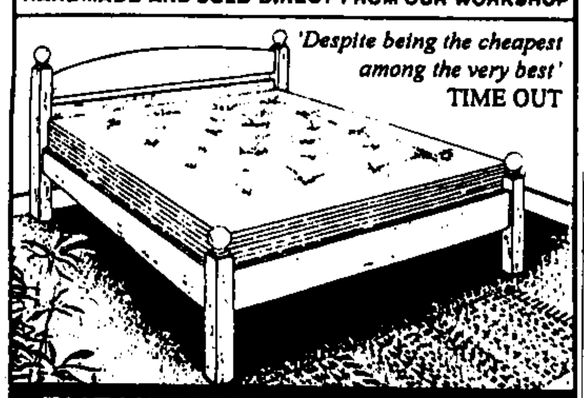

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Gnome

IT WOULD be hard to describe my intense feelings of anger and betrayal at the Government's decision to restrict cross-media ownership. They have in effect decided to let my competitors compete with me. This is a disgrace.

After all the money I have paid to the Conservative party and all the elections I have won for them, now to be treated so shabbily is beyond belief.

The idea that I have too large a slice of the media cake is a gross distortion of the facts and the suggestion that subsequently my power is too great for any individual is a grotesque caricature of the truth.

I am glad to say that this view is shared by leader writers on such diverse papers as the *Daily Gnome*, *The Sunday Gnome*, *News of the Gnomes* and *Gnomeday* — not to mention such respected current affairs commentators such as Mr Sid Arslikhan, political editor of the TV station BGnomeB.

All are agreed that the proposed restriction on the Gnome Corporation is iniquitous and a slap in the face for the most loyal friend British free enterprise has ever known. And I'm seriously thinking of moving to Italy instead.

So there.

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PRIVATE EYE

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COLOUR SECTION

THE weightiest opposition to Lord Nolan's mild proposals to put a brake on MPs' greed and sleaze came from the father of the House, Sir Edward "Grocer" Heath.

He told MPs that disclosure of the amounts they receive for consultancies, directorships and the like would be "a serious blow to democracy in this country". Heath said he had declared his own interests in the register — and regretted there weren't more of them. He was too modest to spell them all out again, and so for the record the *Eye* will do so for him.

Heath's main recent interests are with companies engaged in expanding trade with China and its government, which specialises in torturing dissidents. The Grocer is "development adviser" to the China Investment and Development Fund Ltd and to the subsidiary of merchant bank Kleinwort Benson set up to make money in China. He is also adviser to the China Ocean Shipping company.

MPs are still reeling from his recent speech in a debate on China and Hong Kong in which he forgot to mention China's mass imprisonments without trial, torture or the Tiananmen Square massacre in Beijing, preferring to concentrate his oratory on praising China's new market economy. Mao Tse Tung, he said wittily, had given him two pandas, but the current regime had offered to sell him a panda for £1 million. Here, he trumpeted, was proof of the new market philosophy of the Chinese!

Not content with one huge country in Asia, Heath has substantial business interests in another and declares himself in the register to be "international patron" for the Varkey International Academy in Bombay.

One of the few issues on which he agreed with Margaret Thatcher was the importance to Britain of the sultan of Brunei, on whose behalf the Grocer has written publicly and eloquently.

In his speech on Nolan he referred proudly to his membership of the public review board of Arthur Andersen, the celebrated accountants. He boasted that Arthur Andersen accountants are not allowed to have lunch with their clients — but forgot to mention the long government ban on Andersen after the firm's not entirely distinguished handling of the account of one John de Lorean, crook extraordinaire.

WHO could not have been touched by Sir Jerry Wiggin's pathetic *apologia* to the House of Commons after impersonating another MP? Such impropriety will surely only be prevented in future by the introduction of identity cards for honourable members!

Wiggins referred, of course, to "this isolated incident". Isolated, presumably, from every other similar incident that's gone before.

For what's this? Backbiter's *Hansard* of 30 November 1989 shows that Mr (as he then was)

Jerry Wiggin MP stated in Parliament that the new "British Sugar plant will consume some 750,000 tonnes of (unused) straw per year but that the innovative technology required and the high risks involved mean that it may need substantial contributions from the Government. Will the Minister make representations to the Department of Trade and Industry in favour of this excellent British enterprise?"

So determined was Sir Jerry in his support of straw-recycling that, in the heat of the moment, he forgot to mention that he was also at that time a consultant of, ahem, British Sugar!

Perhaps the overworked member for Weston-super-Mare, who has diligently visited all five continents on behalf of his constituents, was merely suffering from jet lag?

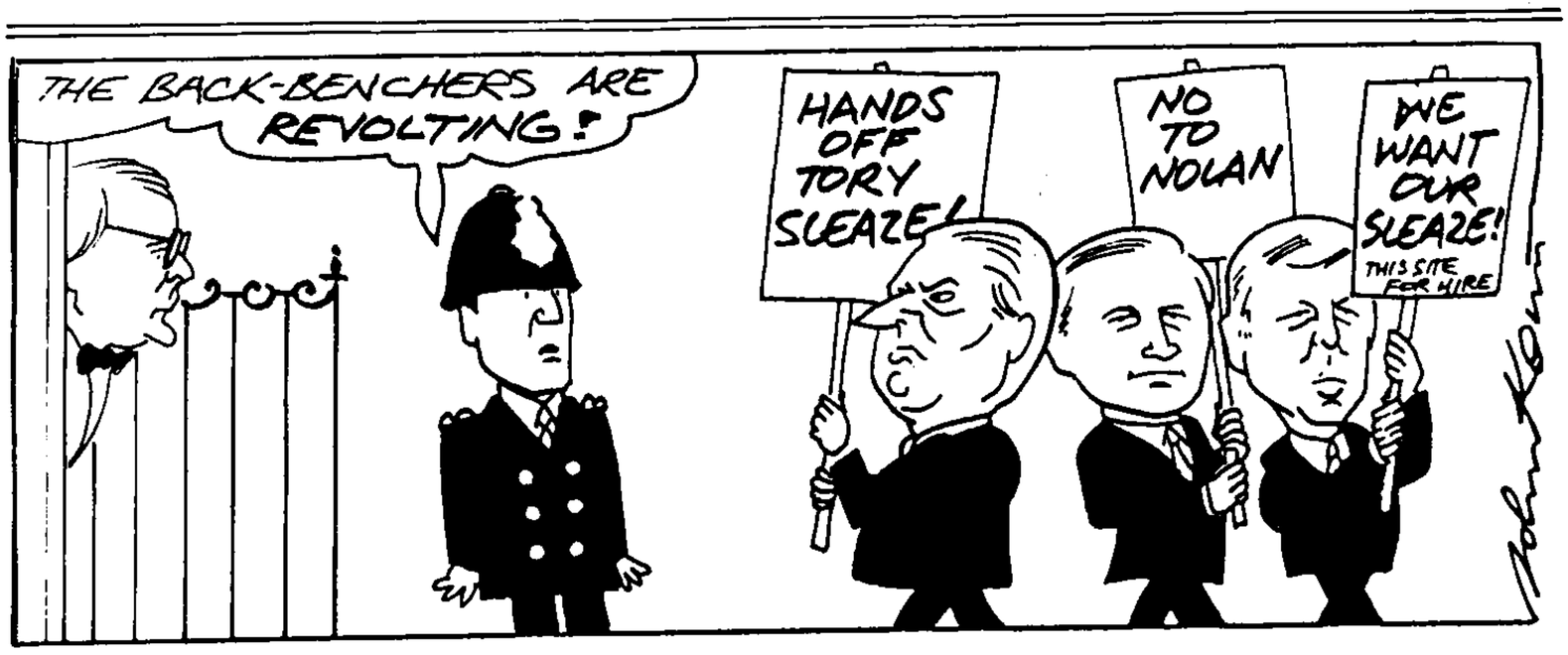
100 YEARS AGO

ONE of the MPs most keen to vote himself a 38 per cent increase in his parliamentary expenses recently was Jerry Wiggin, Tory member for Weston-super-Mare.

Wiggin pleaded the case in the Commons debate but then later let slip what many believe the extra cash is used for. An MP needed extra secretarial assistance, Wiggin told the *Times*, "to keep his diary, deal with phone calls and *help him in his outside business interests*" (our emphasis).

Wiggin's view that the taxpayer should subsidise his moonlighting activities will no doubt be of interest to his Somerset constituents.

Eye, 31 July 1992



Street of Shame

WHITHER Anna Pasternak, hackette turned hack "author" (cf the seminal *Princess In Love*)?

Her new "novel", *Feud*, based on the row between Jamie Palumbo (who was briefly mesmerized by Pasternak) and his property tycoon father, Lord Palumbo, includes a number of sub-plots which are aimed at paying back Pasternak's ex-flames — men like *Daily Mail* features editor Richard Addis.

In a curious twist another Pasternak ex- has offered the London *Evening Standard* a sheaf of "steamy" Pasternak love letters. Palumbo can be excluded as a suspect as he is enraged at any suggestion that he might have coupled with the ambitious harpy.

LAST MONTH the *Daily Express* revealed the exciting discovery that fatty thighs could be dissolved with the aid of a revolutionary new cream. By an astonishing coincidence, the next day's *Sun* carried extensive coverage of the miracle cream, complete with before and after photos of the vanishing fat tissues.

However, the day after promoting the cream the *Express* printed a nervous piece disclosing the involvement of former hack Kit Miller, a man whose interest in health promotion has led to several court cases and a generous helping of libel damages (see *Eyes passim*). The *Express* reported that Miller, a former lover of Samantha Fox, would be delighted to send a refund to any reader whose thighs failed to thin as a result of using the cream.

A day later the *Sun* carried a similarly cautious message, Miller's involvement obviously having come as a surprise to his former colleagues at Wapping. Still, no doubt the promise of refunds will be entirely unnecessary if these creams are as good as the tabloids insist they are.

Meanwhile in an unrelated case down under, another former British hack and lover of Samantha Fox, Peter Foster, is being sought by trading standards officers in connection with an allegedly fraudulent brand of thigh cream. Officials from Australia's trade practices commission fear that he may have fled to England. No doubt *Express* and *Sun* hacks will be keeping a close eye out for him, wherever he is!

CAN MARRIAGE REALLY SURVIVE ADULTERY? asked the *Daily Express* in a pisspoor feature last month, quoting at length an "old Etonian broadcaster who has committed adultery with a certain abandon".

Disgracefully *Express* hacks have taken this to be a reference to their very own Blimp-shaped columnist and Classic FM presenter, Paul Callan, whose bespectacled Christopher Biggins-style features beamed out at readers from the very next page.

"My wife would be upset if it became an affair," the unnamed old Etonian bragged. "There are chasms of difference between that and going to bed with someone."

Though the lecherous Callan sits next to Rosemary Carpenter, author of the article, there are clearly chasms of difference between the "old Etonian" quoted and Paul Callan. The old phoney merely wears the Eton tie and claims, fraudulently, to have been schooled there. And there can be no connection with Callan's notorious expenses claim after a VE Day assignment in Germany — when he charged £250 for an "interpreter" whose linguistic skills were in obscure Ugandan dialects.

Sources close to the deadline...

This issue's winner is the *Sun*'s Andy Coulson (*again*), who consulted:

"an insider" (x3); "a pal" (x2); "Paula's friends"; "a festival insider"; "a Warner spokesperson"; "sources"; "a guest at a bash in London's posh Westminster Boating Club"; "one onlooker".

AT LEAST the dire *Daily Express* has one loyal reader — Susan Barrantes, Fergie's mum.

The Ferguson clan's descent into grinding poverty continues with news that hard-up Mrs Barrantes has been reduced to entering a vulgar mother and daughter contest in the rag in an attempt to win £1,500 worth of Harrods clothes. Alas, she didn't even win.

MAX "Hitler" Hastings, editor of the *Daily Telegraph*, is always swift to condemn the tabloids for their invasions of privacy. So one wonders how he feels about a newspaper which invades the privacy of someone who has learning difficulties, and who is therefore rather more vulnerable and unable to defend herself than the average Tory MP.

The paper in question is Hitler's own *Daily Telegraph*, which in April published a long feature by the tiresome right-wing hackette Minette Marrin about her sister Caroline, a mentally handicapped woman now in her forties who has been a resident of a Bristol-based charity, the Home Farm Trust, for some 20 years.

Caroline, who had no idea she was being featured, was furious and deeply upset when she saw the article. She was also distressed to see that the paper had used a large photograph of her, also without her knowledge and permission.

Caroline has become more independent of late, and is looking to move to one of the charity's "satellite" houses where residents are encouraged to fend for themselves. But none of this was reflected in the article. To support her own anti-PC posturing, Minette Marrin gave the impression that the charity favours segregated communities for mentally handicapped people, when in fact the opposite is the case.

Minette Marrin also referred in the *Telegraph* to her sister's views on sex. After the piece appeared, the charity had a number of dodgy calls from alleged "psychiatrists" wanting to contact and help pretty, innocent young Caroline. As the director-general of Home Farm Trust pointed out in a letter to Max Hastings: "People with disabilities are extremely vulnerable to predatory people intent on abusing them."

PETER McLIE may be The World's Worst Columnist, but even his enemies have always assumed there was at least one subject he knew about — viz. his native Scotland, about which he waxes lyrical at every opportunity.

In his capacity as a member of the "Scotia Nostra", McHackey wrote a long article for the *Mail on Sunday*'s Night and Day section two weeks ago about William Wallace. Wallace, he declared, "is Scotland's greatest hero... He thrashed the English at Bannockburn and invaded Northumberland before being sent fleeing into the heather by Edward I at Falkirk."

Er, not quite. The Scots did indeed thrash the English at Bannockburn in 1314, under the leadership of Robert Bruce, but Wallace and Edward I were unavoidably absent from the battlefield — since they had both been dead for some years. Wallace was executed in 1305, and Edward died in 1307.

As McLie himself would probably put it: isn't life grand?

"THE new BMW 750iL has more computer power than Apollo 13," brown-nosed the soaraway *Sun* in a grovelling plug for the new German auto. Oops! Wasn't Apollo 13 the one that blew up?

DAVID "Rommel" Montgomery's appointment of thirtysomething Terry Quinn as editor of the *Daily Record* has led to an outbreak of New Age love and caring at the once drunken, hard-as-nails Glasgow tabloid.

First Quinn negotiated a job for his paramour, twentysomething Lucy Alsop, as arts editor. Then grizzled Glasgow hacks were gobsmacked to see hosts of new *Record* executives arriving for an early morning meeting in the editor's office — where they formed a circle and held hands before breaking off to hug one another.

This ritual, known as "Huggies", is now thought to have replaced the traditional mid-morning head-butting session at editor's conference.

"It's the young woman who lives in a fuck-me shoe"

READERS who write to the *Daily Mirror* asking about the allegedly socialist organ's vicious policy against the National Union of Journalists have received vitriolic replies from the rag's political supremo, David "Scab" Seymour.

A former FoC (union rep), Seymour pens crude attacks on John Foster, the NUJ general-secretary, asking why Foster didn't object when Maxwell introduced all his tyrannies at the *Mirror*. "Don't you find such hypocrisy sickening?" asks Seymour — who forgets to mention that Foster was not general-secretary at the time, and that he, Seymour, used to take daily dictation from the Fat Fraudster, which duly appeared in the *Mirror* as "editorials".

FACT: Seymour also accepted a £3,000 loan from the Fat Man.

ONE of *Daily Star* editor Phil Walker's first good deeds on taking control of the rag was to give his predecessor Brian "Mussolini" Hitchen the perfect leaving present — a staff job for his preposterous 21-year-old son, Alexander Hitchen.

Unlike his professional northerner father, young Alexander is a would-be Sloane Ranger with an upper-class twit accent. But although he is paid a handsome salary, he seems reluctant to spend any more of it than he has to. In a memo to the *Star*'s travel editor Brian O'Hanlon, which has somehow come into the *Eye*'s hands, the greedy whippersnapper asks: "Please could you find me somewhere hot to go between 17 July and 31 July."

He also adds, mysteriously, "thank you for all you have done for me in the past" — suggesting that this isn't the first freebie he has extracted from the generous O'Hanlon, who is an old friend of "Mussolini" and his family.

Hitchen senior is always pontificating about "spongers" and "scroungers" in his *Sunday Express* column. Do these strictures apply to his own son?

THAT laudable new group, Wimmin in Journalism, came under fire recently after its *Times* representative, assistant editor Mary Ann Sieghart, invited only a select few *Thunderer* hackettes to lunch.

The invitation from Siegheil to the Hothouse restaurant in Wapping was meant for debate on how wimmin should break through editorial "glass ceilings".

But the excluded newsroom hackettes felt the higher echelons did not consider them good enough company. After slighted colleagues questioned Mary Ann (who is also known as "Wonderful Me") she retorted that she had always planned to hold *four* separate lunches for all ranks of women on the paper.

Strangely, those asked (via the office e-mail system) to the first lunch were requested to keep it secret, as not everyone could be invited.

JUST FANCY THAT

THE Old Rugbeian Society, for former inmates of the public school, has issued a request: "If you know the addresses of any of these members named below, please send them to J.C. Marshall, Vivarium Cottage, Hillmorton Road, Rugby."

Among those listed is one Rushdie, A.S.

Curse of Gnome

LIFE has not been the same for Soraya Khashoggi, the girl from the back streets of Leicester who married an incredibly rich arms dealer, since she misguidedly attempted to interfere with the *Eye*'s editorial content.

As the wife of Adnan Khashoggi, Soraya put pressure on the *Eye* to drop a story about her husband's arms deals in India. Her efforts to gag Lord Gnome were to no avail; and ever since poor Mrs Khashoggi has had it rough. First she became the ex-Mrs Khashoggi; and now she has moved back to Hungerford where she was once a waitress in the Bear Hotel but now runs an antiques stall.

She is also reduced to squabbling with her landlady, Lady Troup, who said of Soraya's home that it was "not somewhere I would expect someone of any class to occupy".

MUSEUM NEWS

WHY was Timothy Clifford, director of the National Galleries of Scotland, overlooked as a replacement for the dreadful Elizabeth Esteve-Coll at the Victoria & Albert Museum?

Certainly not because the trustees feared his straight-talking might put off potential zillionaire benefactors.

It was Clifford of course who observed that John-Paul Getty had stumped up a fortune to keep Canova's The Three Graces in Britain simply to thwart the Getty museum in California and spite his late father. Coincidentally, however, Getty was cited as a referee by the man who *did* get the V&A job — Alan Borg of the Imperial War Museum.

Borg was previously inaugural keeper of the Sainsbury Centre for the Visual Arts at the University of East Anglia, which was established by Robert Sainsbury... who recently donated £10,000 to the V&A's theatre section... and was Borg's other referee...

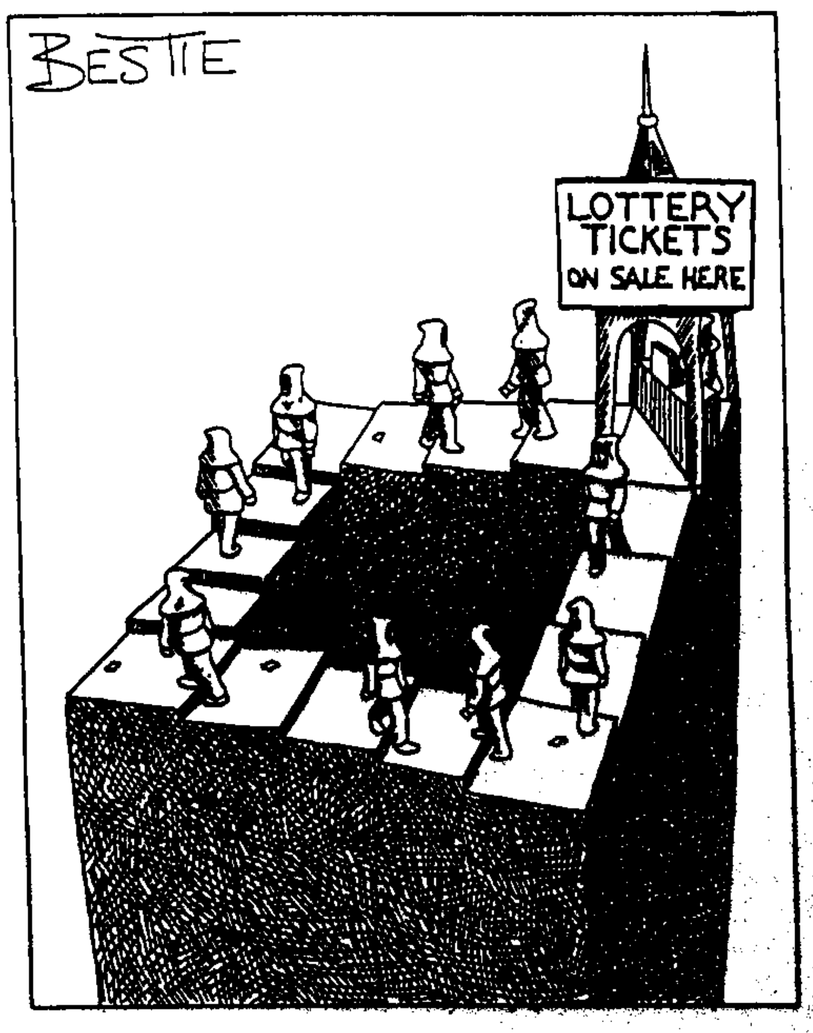
In perfect symmetry, Esteve-Coll becomes vice-chancellor of the UEA.

FA CUP

ANOTHER candidate for the worst-ever financial advisor has found its way to the *Eye*. The award could go to Johnson Fry plc, whose Corporate Finance Branch was recommended to Peter Horton of Blackheath Park, London.

In 1988 he went to the company because they were known as experts on the Tory flagship Business Expansion Scheme. They advised him to invest his £6,000 in three companies. The investment would get tax relief and, in five years' time, the private companies would be floated on the stock exchange, when the value of his shares could be expected to rocket.

Unfortunately, every single one of the companies he was advised to put money into, from squid fishers to fast-setting concrete, went into receivership. So Mr Horton's return on his £6,000 investment was absolutely nothing.



Legal News

GRETA AKPENEYE, a south London headmistress, has abandoned her libel case against the *Eye*. This follows a four-day hearing in the high court two weeks ago, at the end of which a jury was unable to reach a verdict.

The case arose from an article published in February 1992, which mentioned that Akpeneye had failed to pay a typsetting bill from Leveller Graphics, a left-wing printing firm. When Leveller Graphics tried to secure payment, we alleged, it found itself accused of racism.

Akpeneye's barrister, the Tory MP Edward Garnier QC, told the court that Akpeneye had not been liable for the bill. However, the *Eye* produced two witnesses from Leveller Graphics, Mike Parker and Richard Reeve, who both testified that she had brought the typesetting work to them.

After hearing the evidence, Mr Justice Drake ruled in favour the *Eye*, agreeing that she was indeed responsible for the bill. After that, the only question for the jury to decide was whether she had been "dishonest" in avoiding payment.

"The article does accuse Greta Akpeneye of not paying the bill," the judge explained in his summing-up. "But it is true. She was legally liable to pay. But does it accuse the plaintiff of dishonesty? The plaintiff says yes, the defendants say no."

When the jury failed to reach a verdict, Akpeneye agreed not to pursue the case any further. Each side will pay its own costs.

THE day before John Stalker, the former deputy chief constable of Greater Manchester, was due to give evidence in the case of his erstwhile friend Kevin Taylor against the Manchester police, the Royal Ulster Constabulary suddenly released 2,000 "new documents".

The documents were said to relate to Mr Stalker's inquiry into the RUC's "shoot to kill" policy in Northern Ireland — an inquiry that was abruptly halted when Stalker was taken off the case after he and Taylor were systematically smeared by their colleagues and by MI5.

The sudden release of so many documents was clearly intended to delay Stalker's appearance in the witness box. But it failed to do so when Mr Justice Owen, after long arguments, ordered that the case should proceed.

Manchester police lawyers were still hoping to use the documents to hold up the case when their efforts were spoiled by the treasury solicitor's barrister who is "sitting in" on the case at taxpayers' expense. He intervened to demand that all 2,000 documents should be handed to the government to see if they should be subject to another public interest immunity certificate (ie gagging order by intelligence).

The delay involved in the inspection for security of all these documents almost certainly means they will never be heard of again. The police plan to stop Stalker was thus balked by the government's all-pervading obsession with secrecy.

CHRISTOPHER Brasher and John Disley, founders of the London Marathon, made sure the whole world knew of their libel victory last week over Channel 4 and the *New Statesman*.

Brasher's old chum Nigel Dempster ran the story as the lead item in his column, and most other newspapers carried photos of Brasher quaffing champagne. To ensure maximum coverage Brasher had taken the unusual step of hiring a PR company, KBH Communications, to issue press releases, arrange a press conference at Simpson's-in-the-Strand and organise "photo opportunities".

Under the terms of the settlement, Channel 4 and the *New Statesman* agreed to pay £380,000 in damages and £800,000 in legal costs. How on earth was such an enormous bill for costs run up in a case that never even went to trial? For once the culprits were not the lawyers but the accountants. Brasher's own accountants, Wagstaffs, charged £105,444 for their work in preparing the case. On top of that Brasher's defence team asked Arthur Andersen to go through his accounts as well. Its fee? A wallet-boggling £220,412.

Who was responsible for this *debacle*? Step forward the greatest living Scottish journalist, Duncan "Dunky" Campbell, who wrote both the offending *NS* article about Brasher and the Channel 4 *Dispatches* programme on the same subject. Dunky was so excited by the story that on the night of Channel 4's transmission he sent letters to the Inland Revenue, the Charity Commissioners, the Institute of Chartered Accountants, the fraud squad etc etc, demanding that they all launch full-scale inquiries into Brasher's financial affairs. They duly did so — and found no evidence of wrongdoing. Indeed the IR investigation discovered that far from underpaying his income tax Brasher was in fact due a rebate of £15,000.

This legal rebuff has apparently done little to stem Dunky's appetite for litigation. He is currently suing the secretary of the Broadcasting Complaints Commission for libel.

EILEEN PEMBRIDGE'S campaign for the Law Society presidency continues. As Lord Gnome has noted (*Eye* 871), he has had a long and colourful relationship with Ms Pembridge via the infamous Sonia Sutcliffe libel case against this organ. In that case she represented t'Yorkshire Ripper's wife.

After the case was over Lord Gnome complained about Pembridge's conduct to the Solicitors Complaints Bureau (SCB). She was cleared.

He is shocked to note one of Ms Pembridge's aims if elected Law Soc president. A recent *Legal Times* article quoted her as saying: "SCB costs have got out of hand". Her solution? To consider barring complaints by "our clients' opponents".

Surely the saintly friend of the perjuring Sonia Sutcliffe cannot mean Lord Gnome? If so, what a wonderful election manifesto: "No complaints allowed against solicitors by people who might have cause to complain". The Law Society would then be living up to its finest traditions.

ARCHER: THE LIE DIRECT

MICHAEL CRICK's new biography of Jeffrey Archer throws more light on the case of the man who in 1975 took three suits worth $700 from Simpson's store in Toronto, Canada, was arrested by two store detectives and taken to the police station.

Crick reveals that the man was Jeffrey Archer. He was in Toronto at the time giving evidence for the prosecution in a fraud trial. "It was all a misunderstanding," says Crick, who suggests that Archer had not realised that he had left the store. There was a connecting bridge between Simpson's and Eatons, another big store, and Archer was arrested on the bridge. Crick says Archer told police he didn't realise the bridge wasn't part of Simpson's, and was released.

Archer himself has never publicly offered such an explanation, and he has always denied being the man arrested. In 1985, when the *Daily Mirror* approached Archer with very strong evidence that he had been arrested for stealing three suits, Archer's lawyer, Geoffrey Grimes, then of Lovell, White and King, wrote unequivocally: "Mr Archer was not involved in this incident".

In 1987, the *Mirror* wrote again, this time directly to Archer, with proof that former senior officers in the Canadian mounted police and even the then attorney-general of Ontario believed the man arrested at Simpsons was indeed Jeffrey Archer. This time, after a short delay, Archer wrote back himself — a single line: "I was not involved in this incident." Yet now Crick says he *was* involved. All very odd.

The Marquesa is on holiday.

IN THE TEAROOM

THE spectacle of plump Tories indignantly huffing about Lord Nolan's modest proposals to clean up parliamentary sleaze has prompted some Labour members to call for an even tighter ethics squeeze.

One plan, hatched in the tea room last week, was for the opposition parties to adopt a West Point-style "Honour Code" and then challenge the Tories to follow suit. The code would be based upon a single golden rule: "No member shall use his position as an MP to enrich himself."

This formula would allow members to continue to run family businesses and hold second jobs for which they were properly qualified. However, they would not be able to accept directorships or consultancies that wouldn't be on offer if they were not MPs.

It would also outlaw the practice whereby MPs who bring businessmen together — for jolly arms deals and so on — take a fee for their services. They could still broker deals, but only for the love of country or constituency. Doctors, lawyers, journalists and other professionals would be untouched.

'Urquhart'

MICHAEL Heseltine may well rue his letter of 24 February to John Patten MP which prompted the journalist Martyn Gregory to sue the Minister for libel.

Gregory's *Dispatches* programme in January detailed the involvement of British companies in supplying torture equipment to a wide variety of unpleasant regimes. Heseltine writes in the letter: "The allegation made that British Aerospace's Royal Ordnance supplied electric batons to Saudi Arabia . . . has been vigorously denied by both the company and the Ministry of Defence."

Very pompously, he continues: "Equally, this Department would not knowingly give any support to promote sales overseas of torture equipment."

This is a statement which the company Hiatt Engineering of Birmingham might contest. Hiatt received support from Heseltine's Department of Trade and Industry to attend the 1991 COPEX Exhibition in Miami. Eight years previously, Hiatt had been exposed in the *Daily Mirror* as trading in torturer-friendly leg irons and manacles (*Footnotes, Eye* 864). This time, the same wares were taken to the US, labelled "leg cuffs". Amnesty International estimated that 80 per cent of the visitors to the exhibition were from countries where torture was commonplace.

Did no one in the DTI make the connection — as Heseltine implies — or did the President simply forget about it?

MOST observers assume that at least two ministers are at risk when the Scott inquiry findings are published: William Waldegrave (agriculture) and Nicholas Lyell (attorney-general). Less widely appreciated is the danger to three other senior cabinet ministers: Kenneth Clarke (chancellor); Malcolm Rifkind (defence); and Peter Lilley (social security).

According to an anonymous article in the *Economist* (27 May), Lord Justice Scott has rejected the arguments of all three ministers for their signing of public interest immunity certificates in the Matrix Churchill case.

To soften the impending blow, ministers are giving active support to the campaign orchestrated by Lord Howe (see last *Eye*) to prolong and obstruct Scott's deliberations. The *Economist* quotes one minister as saying: "Scott is astonishingly ignorant of the working of government and did not even know what PPS stood for." The minister, the *Eye* can disclose, is William Waldegrave, whose performance at the Scott inquiry hearings is now being described by the Scott team as PPS... as in *P*retty *P*oor *S*how.

SIR Patrick Mayhew's nervous handshake for Gerry Adams seems to have lent some credibility to Bill Clinton's conference on investment in Ulster, during which the Clinton administration has been busily taking full credit for all sorts of projects in Ulster it had absolutely nothing to do with promoting, never mind financing.

The State Department is boasting of the construction of a Hilton Hotel in Belfast as one of the benefits of Clinton's peace process. In fact the hotel is being built as part of the British government's Laganside project and was already under construction before the ceasefires. And Hilton is actually owned by the British company Ladbroke, although few voters in Boston will realise this.

Despite being billed as a Presidential initiative, Clinton was unable to find the money to even fund the investment event from his budget. The cost was therefore met primarily from fees paid by delegates from Ulster, who also had to put up their own travel and accommodation costs. Many delegates were from quangos and government departments, and even those in the private sector will happily write the cost off against next year's tax. In short, the British taxpayer will pick up most of the bill for Clinton's conference.

O·B·N

Alan Clark is my personal political Superman. Impossibly handsome, clever, wicked, funny, charming, rich, fantastically indiscreet and, best of all, sufficiently thoughtful for you never to be sure which line he will take. Need I go on?

ANNE ROBINSON
Times magazine

Submitted by Nicholas Ferguson.

£10 paid for all entries put forward for the Order of the Brown Nose.

THE PLAN to dump the Brent Spar oil platform in the North Sea — foreshadowed in the *Eye*, HP Sauce, April 21 — is the outcome of a row between government departments: the Department of Environment and the Scottish Office, which are opposed to it, and the Department of Trade and Industry, which is forcing it through.

The oil companies went to the North Sea promising that they would "clear up totally at the end of the day," as the chairman of the Marine Forum, Professor Alasdair D. McIntyre, told the *Eye*. That was when they wanted to drill for oil. Now that many of the oilfields are approaching depletion, they are faced with the problem with disposing of 200 giant oil platforms. And, in a forerunner of what the nuclear power companies want to do, they prefer to choose the cheapest way out.

The government's much-delayed Consultative Document, published a year late, also leans in the direction of the cheapest option, which means leaving millions of tonnes of iron and steel, and chemical pollutants, to rot in the sea.

When the Brent Spar issue came up, Shell wanted to sink it, invoking what is known as the cheapest option, known officially as BPEO — the Best Practicable Environmental Option. They are supposed to look at all options equally and make a valid judgement. Then the DTI Review Body considers the issue.

But the Review Body turned down Shell's option on the grounds that Shell had not looked at all the other options adequately. At this point, Dr Christopher Fay, the chairman of Shell UK, is reported to have had a word with Tim Eggar, the Energy Minister, and it came about as if by magic that the recommendations of the DTI Review Body were overturned, to the dismay of the Department of the Environment and the Scottish Office.

Eggar worked for the oil industry before joining the government. He was a director of Charterhouse Petroleum. He is one Minister who, with redundancy approaching, will be thinking about alternative employment. The oil industry will be his obvious choice. Naturally, he will not have allowed this consideration to have affected his decision about Shell.

TORY party chairman Jeremy Hanley, aka "The Gaffer", has gaffed again.

Three months ago an armed police officer in south London shot dead David Ewin, who was driving a stolen Toyota sports car. The Yard gave a robust defence of the killing, stating that the copper had opened fire only because he was hanging on to the car and in fear of his life.

Hanley, as the local MP (Richmond and Barnes), offered his own instant verdict. "It shows what a great job police do in making sure they protect our interests," he said, "and I congratulate them on their actions."

Oops! As a *Newsnight* investigation by Paul Lashmar revealed two weeks ago, the police account was wrong. Eyewitnesses insist the police officer was never hanging on to the car, and that neither the police nor the public was in any danger at the time.

Will Hanley now see the danger of sounding off first and asking questions later? Most unlikely.

'Backbiter'

SIGNAL FAILURES

MANAGERS and workers at ABB's train factory in York, to be closed later this year with the loss of 750 jobs, are furious.

ABB bought BREL (British Rail Engineering Ltd) on the strength of government indications that much of Network SouthEast was to be equipped with new trains in the 1990s. The firm invested heavily, setting up York works to build the huge quantities of Networker trains which the south-east still desperately needs. But after the first few orders, the Government reneged on the commitments made when it was trying to flog BREL. BR didn't ask for any quotes for new trains last year (German Railways ordered new trains worth more than £5bn). As a result ABB is now having to shut the factory which seemed to have an exciting future a few years ago.

Meanwhile, John Major obviously thought he would impress backbenchers and voters alike with his robust response to accusations that the Government's sell-off mania was to blame for the closure of ABB. "Privatisation is no more responsible for those job losses than it is for an outbreak of measles," he declared.

The remark did not go down well with those south-east Tory MPs whose commuting constituents know that rail privatisation caused the investment freeze which has forced them to travel in outdated bone-shakers while skilled carriage builders are losing their jobs.

DEFENDING his recent fares-capping sop to commuters in southern England, transport secretary Brian Mawhinney said higher subsidies wouldn't be needed to meet rising costs because private rail operators would attract more passengers onto the trains than BR is now carrying.

What he doesn't realise is that because of the shortage of rolling stock in Britain, and no prospect of any new stuff to come, extra passengers physically can't get on the trains. On many routes BR has attracted so many extra passengers in recent years that it has had to push up fares to discourage people from travelling at certain times. Referring to chronic overcrowding on the Portsmouth to Cardiff route on Fridays, Regional Railways manager Chris Gibb has said he will be "seeking additional ways of suppressing demand".

While the Government refuses to permit construction of new trains to accommodate growing demand at peak times, it is forging ahead with a profligate roads programme essentially designed to allow the roads to cope with, er, growing demand at peak times.

INFORMATION on local services out of London's Paddington has disappeared from the station concourse's main timetable display, now devoted to InterCity services.

BR says it can only put up a limited timetable display because Paddington station is a listed building. Presumably it doesn't want frills like timetables disturbing the aesthetics of such Brunel masterpieces as Burger King, Tie Rack, John Menzies and the Paddington Bear gift stall.

Dr B. Ching

NOOKS and CRANNIES

"...I stepped out of an Edwardian electric tram on to the grassy height of Snaefel, two thousand feet above sea-level..."

SO begins the essay on his favourite Isle of Man by John Betjeman, blessed founder of this column. *"...An Isle of contrasts! A miniature of all the Western world."*

Alas, it is. That amazing tram — Victorian, in fact — is still running up the mountain and, this year, it celebrates its centenary. To mark this event, the director of tourism had the imaginative idea of demolishing the original surviving tram-shed at Laxey and replacing it by a standard industrial unit. As almost all the other original structures have disappeared, I suppose this was merely tidying up.

Such is official wisdom on this semi-independent crown dependency. Last year, a large chunk of the splendid bayfronted Victorian promenade at Douglas — "that Naples of the North" — occupied by the Villers Hotel was threatened with demolition, and I am sorry to have to report that this is now a large hole. Incredibly, demolition took place before plans of the replacement building were published or approved. Now they have been and, in this case, it may not be as abysmal as most of the new buildings in Douglas — but that is scarcely the point.

I make no apology for returning, yet again, to the Isle of Man. It is an object lesson, a miniature of the western world, indeed; but more a miniature of the ideal world Stephen Dorrell, the national heritage minister, and the rest of them in government would like to achieve by relaxing the planning process. Historic buildings are "registered" on Man: that is, listed. But the legislation has few teeth and, besides, half the buildings of interest remain unregistered. Man remains an island of ancient liberties, and these not only include the liberty to welcome every dubious offshore bank and let it do whatever it wants, but also the liberty to spoil and destroy your own property.

Something must be done to knock a little commonsense into the heads of those who run the island, so I am pleased to report the foundation of SAVE Mann's Heritage. Good luck to it: it needs it. There is so much that needs to be done, and a first battle has emerged in the shape of the Ballamona Hospital outside Douglas.

This is one of those solid Victorian asylums set in spacious grounds. It was built in 1866-69 and designed by J.H. Christian, brother of Ewan and

architect to the church commissioners. It is a fine pile, beautifully made; now it is threatened with demolition.

The Isle of Man has fallen for the fraud of Neglect in the Community; so the building will be emptied and replaced by a brand new general hospital for Douglas. The new hospital could, of course, be built next to the existing buildings, which could find a new use. But no, this is the Isle of Man so they must come down. In a summary report of an environmental assessment of the scheme, the impact of the new building and of access roads on treeside hedges and even the Manx Robber Fly are all discussed, but hardly any mention is made of poor Christian's masterpiece. All it says is: "The other buildings, none of which are registered, are likely to be removed when vacated. The central tower in particular is scheduled for demolition. Their removal therefore is not an impact caused by the proposed new acute hospital development."

The mendacity of this is breathtaking. And, of course, the hospital *ought* to be registered. But let us forget the fact that the Victorian buildings are accomplished and distinguished; the point is that they are solid and eminently reusable. Conservation is not just about history and beauty, it is also about good housekeeping, about not destroying structures made of non-renewable materials. It would be prohibitively expensive to build something like Ballamona today; to throw away such a potentially useful structure is simply a wicked waste.

The department of health and social security wants to sweep away the hospital as it has deliberately not been maintained and so is in poor shape and needs money spent on it; better to replace it by some cheap tat. But is this in the best interests of the "community"? When civil servants and local government officials have their hands in the till or invest huge sums of public money with, say, the BCCI, they are at least reprimanded. But when they wilfully neglect a fine building which is a public asset, nothing happens to them. Well, it should, as in its way this is a form of theft. So all power to SAVE Mann's Heritage.

I LIKE to get quick results. No sooner had I reported in the last Eye that the National Trust wanted to celebrate its centenary by sticking a radio mast on top of the water tower on the top of Toys Hill in Kent than the planning application was withdrawn. So it really was just an unfortunate mistake, we assume.

'Piloti'

[Ayrton] Senna's death unleashed a tide of global mourning not seen since J.F.K. was assassinated.

JOHN DRAYTON
Vanity Fair

A source is only as good as its provenance. Postmodern writers are constantly pained and inspired by the anxieties and uncertainties of influence: fears of misquotation, pretension and plagiarism fuel the nightmares of literati as their forebears were once haunted by the charge of heresy, treachery and homosexuality. The history of the production, performance and reception of the Doctor Who story, KINDA, closely addresses this paradox of literature's indebtedness to a canon which purports to prize originality as its last best virtue.

ALEC CHARLES
In Vision (Doctor Who fanzine)

But names like man, woman, it's all bullshit, we're all fucking alien. I'd rather call myself alien 'cause I don't really understand society. I got a problem with someone saying to me, that's a man, that's a women. Where the fuck do these ideas come from?

'TRICKY'
The Face

Pseuds Corner

So why is theatre only allowed indoors in sterile, straight-jacket settings designed specifically for it, performed in dry and heartless ways, from texts that are held in awe and trudged out without thought: straight-jacket art? It cannot breathe like this. Yes, theatre needs its homes, its temples, sanctuary for the times of storm, but it must also look beyond its window-

frames, stretch out, bloom: why, when the storm has passed, are we still cowering by the rugged old altar? The sun is shining outside, cracking the flags on the weary facade of our old place of worship: a new people is walking there, in the road by the monument, a shining people full of strength, waiting for direction. As priests we must walk tall into the bright light, and let the people see us, come to us: outshine the light of the sun with the radiance of our Grail-quest, glimmering through the church doors.

Oxford Everyman's Theatre entry
Programme, Brasenose College Oxford
Summer Arts Festival 1995

He is a one-man A to Z of fabulous lore, of words that sweat as they slide and giggle as they gaggle across the page: Adam Zameenzad. The name has the sherbet, show-off fizz of magic in its syllables, the stage name perhaps of the garishly garbed, inscrutably grinning trickster hired to entertain the kids at a Christmas party — the novelist dressed as flamboyant genie, his novel *en fete* with streamers, crackers, disappearances, saving its coup for the grand finale — make 'em laugh, make 'em gasp! I nearly exploded.

TOM ADAIR
Scotland On Sunday

Contributors: J. Boniface, D. Owen, B. Borley, T. Grant, C. Adamson.

£10 paid for entries

TV

Letterman in London (BBC2)

Look At The State We're In (BBC2)

THE ARRIVAL of David Letterman on British terrestrial television, if only for one week, brings to an end the longest bout of foreplay in cultural history.

Letterman — who failed to get Johnny Carson's slot at NBC, moved to CBS and now gets $17 million a year for hosting its late-night show — has sort of been coming here for years. Jonathan Ross, Danny Baker, Clive Anderson and Clive James have all ripped-off his basic format for British viewers. Last year, Michael Jackson screened *The Larry Sanders Show*, a parody of Letterman, on BBC2. Now he's finally been able to show the real thing, or sort of.

It's well known that Wacko, an obsessive Americophile, would ideally like to screen Letterman's show every night in England. But there has been internal opposition from people who think the show is too full of topical American references to work for English viewers, or that the BBC governors would simply not stand for colonisation of the BBC2 schedules on such a scale. The show's only British home remained Sky One. But Letterman's decision to make a week of shows from London gave Wacko his opening. He did a deal to screen the London programmes a week after viewers of Sky One and CBS had seen them and ran them all last week after *Newsnight*. Some might see this as rather pathetically taking the scraps from the table of satellite. But, for Americophiles, it was a great televisual event.

And so British viewers without dishes finally got to see what all the fuss had been about. And, for most of them, it must have been an adult equivalent of discovering that Santa Claus doesn't exist. What BBC2 called *Letterman In London* — CBS calls it *The Late Show With David Letterman*, but there was a risk of the late-night audience on 2 thinking that their usual serious beardies had been hijacked by a gap-toothed US comic — was comedy and chat only just in the Tarbuck class.

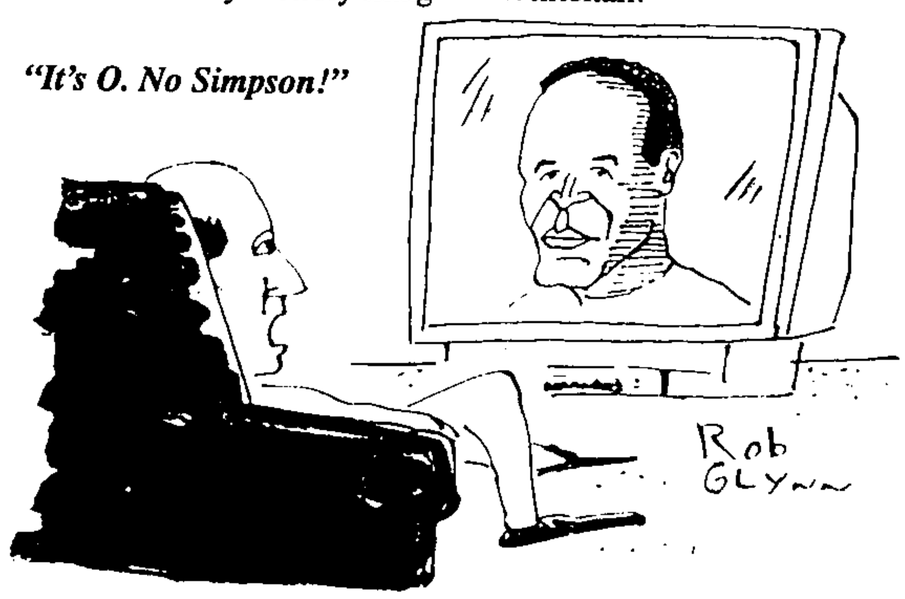
Famed among wannabe-American types in British TV for his sharp wit, Letterman (courtesy of his 10 personal gag writers) made cracks such as "My hotel's kinda close to Buckingham Palace. Funny thing, but when Prince Charles turns his head towards the hotel, the television reception improves!" Ronnie Corbett made that joke 20 years ago, when Prince Charles did at least live in Buckingham Palace, so it had the benefit of accuracy. Fondly imagining jokes about the heir's aural dimensions to be at the cutting edge of British satire, Dave's props squad had mocked up a "Prince Charles ear frisbee" as well as a "Bobby helmet bra".

The London studio audience dutifully roared at references to "Pataki" (the Governor of New York) and "Guiliani" (the Mayor of New York) which it must be thought highly unlikely they understood. And any hopes that Dave's real strength might be as an interviewer were dashed when he brown-nosed through some natter about camels with Peter O'Toole.

Desperate Americophiles were to be found last week explaining that Dave's London shows had perhaps been a little lacking, but that was because he was away from his true satirical material: America. Sadly, even this defence fails. Letterman's general level of humour is an American equivalent of jokes about Prince Charles' ears. Like Johnny Carson, he is relatively dangerous by the standards of safe, advertising-friendly US TV, but, in British terms, he is closer to Michael Barrymore than to Ben Elton. The London gigs showed him up for what he is: overpaid, overrated and, unfortunately, over here.

Another failed television transplant is *Look At The State We're In*, a set of 10-minute squibs about the "extent of state power" which began with a so-what exposé of VAT inspectors and argued that they were nasty and were allowed to behave like little Hitlers and, er, that was it. Last Sunday's second offering employed John Cleese and Dawn French in a sketch alleging that there is a lot of secrecy and (wait for it) bureaucracy in Whitehall.

"It's O. No Simpson!"



The element of transplant here was that the producer, Roger Graef, having established a distinguished track record for fly-on-the-wall documentaries, has bewilderingly been allowed to move across to satire. This genre-swap trick clearly has possibilities. Stand by for Eddie Izzard's fly-on-the-wall series about Strangeways, or Ronnie Corbett's *Panorama* interview with John Major.

You have a horrible feeling that the project began with a clever pitch line from an executive: "Roger Graef — from fly-on-the-wall to off-the-wall. Hey, how about that?" But, in trying to widen his range, Graef has, as marathon runners say, hit the wall.

'Square Eyes'

MEDIA NEWS

RUPERT Murdoch's threat to sell *Today* in the wake of Stephen Dorrell's mild cross-media ownership rules is merely an attempt to mask the fact that he's failed to make a go of the paper and has been quietly anxious to get rid of it for the last couple of years.

But who will go for it?

Step forward Labour peer Lord Hollick!

Hollick's MAI Group owns Anglia TV, as well as a controlling stake in Meridian. Immediately before Dorrell's announcement, MAI pounced on Yorkshire-Tyne Tees, acquiring a 15% shareholding as a prelude to a hostile takeover. This is now barred by Dorrell's proposals and MAI will either have to sit on the stake or sell it on to someone else. A newspaper purchase is therefore Hollick's only option if he wants to keep up with the likes of Rothermere and Pearson: buying *Today* and securing its pro-Labour political stance will also endear him to Tony Blair, who could of course be in a position to change the media ownership rules again in the not too distant future.

Private I-I-I!

THIS ISSUE'S rundown of the nation's most self-obsessed columnists, based on the number of incidences of the word "I" per column-inch.

		Ego Rating
1	Michael Winner (Sunday Times 21/5)	2.31
2	Keith Waterhouse (Mail 25/5)	2.17
3	Jeffrey Bernard (Spectator 27/5)	1.92
4	Michael Winner (Sunday Times 28/5)	1.88
5	Jonathan Ross (Sunday Times 21/5)	1.74
6	Simon Sebag Montefiore (E.S. 23/5)	1.65
7	Michael Pye (Daily Telegraph 26/5)	1.60
8	Oscar Moore (Guardian 20/5)	1.57
9	Zöe Heller (Sunday Times 28/5)	1.35
10	Michael Heseltine (Daily Express 22/5)	1.11

Bubblin' under: Annabel Heseltine, Esther Rantzen, Craig Brown, Sir Edward Heath.

WORLD OF HYPE

WATER bosses in Yorkshire have finally recognised that their standing with customers is below that even of journalists and estate agents. Yorkshire Water is about to respond to customers' complaints about rising bills, flowing sewage, pipe leaks, and excessive profits, executive salaries and share perks.

What is its dynamic response? To get its act together? No. Something far simpler. It is to spend £1 million of customers' money on a "communications initiative" to promote the company to its captive consumers. Most of the money will go on TV ads telling us what a good job Yorkshire Water is doing.

So now Yorkshire Water will pump crap into people's homes as well as into the rivers and sea!

LORD HOWE made a passionate protest at the Scott inquiry on behalf of those top civil servants who found themselves interrogated and criticised in public without the opportunity of legal representation.

He exhibited no such conern, however, in a recent case before the Broadcasting Complaints Commission in which the complainants were himself and his former Cabinet colleague, Lord Lawson.

The noble lords were objecting to a Channel 4 programme about government economic policy in the Thatcher years. Both had agreed to take part.

Only after the programme was broadcast did the two pompous peers protest. They had no objections to the factual content of the programme, nor to the way they had been treated — but they insisted that they should have been told that the general slant of the programme was "critical of Government policy".

Howe put his own case interminably, without once demanding that the people he complained about should have legal representation. To the rage and astonishment of Channel 4, the Commission upheld the complaints.

Channel 4 applied for a judicial review of the decision. This application was heard by Lord Justice Leggatt, who surprised everyone in court some time after the case started by announcing blithely that Lord Howe and Canon Peter Pilkington, the former Eton schoolmaster who chairs the Broadcasting Complaints Commission, "are known to me".

As is the custom after such declarations, all the barristers agreed that there was no way a High Court judge could ever be influenced by mere personal acquaintance — and the case proceeded. Leggatt flung out the application. Howe, Lawson and the Commission have now agreed a statement of apology which they insist Channel 4 must broadcast. Channel 4 refuse on the grounds that the apology is inaccurate and libellous of the production company which made the film. The stalemate continues.

SOUNDBITES

Linda La Plante: *This is Hugh Massingbred. Don't know who he is.*

Simon Bates: *Berd.*

La Plante: *Massingberd is it? Massing-turd, I think.*

— Linda La Plante on London News Talk Radio's Simon Bates show, berating *Daily Telegraph* TV critic for his review of *The Governor*

CHANNEL 4's new live yoof phone-in programme *Watch This Space* had an inauspicious start. Wannabee presenters were introduced to viewers, who then chose between them in a phone-in poll.

At the end of the show presenter Dominik Diamond was handed an envelope with the names of the successful candidates, which he duly read out.

The winners screamed with joy, the losers looked crestfallen, the credits rolled. In particular, a posh lad called Neil looked devastated after receiving the lowest number of votes.

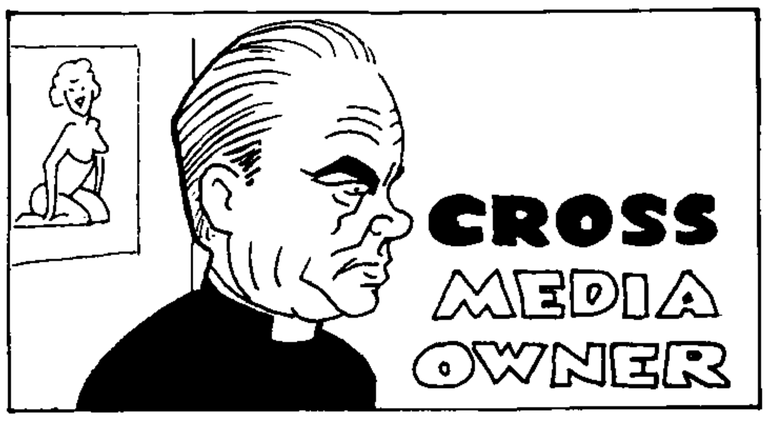
As soon as the show ended, however, the producer announced that a cock-up had taken place — the wrong results had been read out. Posh Neil, humiliated with the lowest score, had actually got the highest. And two hopefuls who thought they had won had actually lost.

The shambles was the result of the real results having been written on the same sheet of paper as imaginary scores used in rehearsal. Diamond had read the wrong ones out. All in the best professional traditions of British yoof TV.

GRANADA television's *World in Action* recently exposed Manchester police force for hiring a fat, racist comedian (Bernard Manning) to entertain the troops.

So how come the same Granada television hired a fat, racist comedian (Johnnie Casson) to prepare the studio audience for the arrival of Richard Madeley and Judy Finnegan in a dry run of their fab new health series, *Get A Life*, on Friday 12 May?

Mr Casson's Paki jokes provided an ironic prelude to the couple's first feature: a ludicrously one-sided expose of the prejudicial attitudes of doctors. Perhaps *World in Action* should investigate.



HACKWATCH: STREET FIGHTING

THE *Daily Mail* could hardly contain its pleasure at Stephen Dorrell's green paper on cross-media ownership last week.

In a rapturous editorial — headlined "It's Good News In Any Medium" — the *Mail* gleefully drew attention to Rupert Murdoch's annoyance at the proposals. "Further evidence, objective commentators may conclude, that this time Mr Major's government has struck an enlightened balance between regulation and freedom."

But where are these "objective commentators"?

Certainly not in the *Mail*. Its chairman, Sir David English, is also the chairman of the British Media Industry Group (BMIG), which was set up two years ago for the specific purpose of lobbying the government to allow newspaper tycoons to buy television companies. The other members of the BMIG are Frank Barlow (managing director of Pearson and chairman of the *Financial Times*), Harry Roche (chairman of the Guardian media group) and Frank Rogers (deputy chairman of the *Daily Telegraph*). Their crusade has been energetically supported by Michael Green of Carlton Communications, whose ambitions are also curtailed by the current rules on cross-media ownership.

Now read on...

But the blitz really began in earnest earlier this year, when it was rumoured that Dorrell intended to make only a minor change in the law, merely allowing newspapers to increase their maximum stake in TV stations from 20 per cent to 29.9 per cent. This alarmed the BMIG, which wanted an entirely different system based on overall share of the media "cake" — thereby allowing Associated Newspapers to buy up TV companies (and Carlton TV to buy newspapers) while stopping Rupert Murdoch from expanding any further.

On 1 March the *Daily Mail* carried a lengthy report of a speech delivered by Sir David English at a conference organised by (surprise, surprise) the *Financial Times*. Denouncing the department of national heritage as "the department of nothing happening", he said the current law was "as stupid as anything imposed by the Kremlin on its own citizens during Soviet times". (Really? One wonders how many survivors of the Gulag would agree.)

On 9 March, another of Sir David's titles, the London *Evening Standard*, ran a magnificently one-sided news story on Dorrell's apparent intentions. "British groups are infuriated," it reported, "as the plans would leave them powerless to bid against takeovers by foreign groups, while preserving the loophole allowing Mr Murdoch's News International to own five national newspapers as well as a 50 per cent share and the management control of satellite broadcaster BSkyB." In the *Daily Mail* the same day, Michael Green of Carlton was given space to condemn government thinking as "short-sighted".

Another member of the BMIG, the *Daily Telegraph*, added its voice to the campaign with an editorial on 13 March grumbling that press barons "find themselves having to compete against the international giants of the media with one hand tied behind their back". Not the hand that writes leaders, presumably.

On the same day the *Grauniad* returned to the subject, praising the "formula suggested by the BMIG for a system to measure media control in terms of audience across newspapers, magazines, radio and TV".

Since lobbying had apparently failed to do the trick, the newspaper chiefs then began issuing threats. "The industry as a whole is beginning to recognise that we will probably have to wait for a new government to put any intelligence into dealing with this problem," Sir David English told the *Evening Standard* — an obvious warning that his papers might switch their allegiance if Dorrell didn't deliver what they wanted.

Meanwhile the Pearson group resorted to financial intimidation: although Pearson donated £25,000 to the Tories last year, company "sources" let it be known that they were unlikely to hand over any more dosh if the decision went against them. "If the Tory party hoped to replenish its beleaguered coffers with media donations," the *Grauniad* helpfully pointed out, "the prospect appeared to vanish last week."

Even a government as dim as this one was able to take the hint. At the beginning of May rumours of a cabinet U-turn began to spread. Dorrell, it seemed, had now decided to accept the BMIG's appetising concept of a "media cake", complete with plenty of marzipan and cherries.

And so it came to press. Last Tuesday Dorrell announced his proposals: newspaper groups would be allowed to own TV companies; meanwhile, Murdoch was to be shackled by a rule limiting any one operator to 10 per cent of the overall media market.

Was this good news or bad? It depends on what paper you read. No prizes for guessing the *Daily Telegraph*'s attitude: its report was headed "Dorrell sets out to widen media choice". An accompanying editorial was equally positive: "These are radical proposals, and welcome ones."

The *Mail* was delighted too. "Media shake-up means more choice for the public but restraints on Murdoch," revealed its industrial correspondent, David Norris. How can the public get "more choice" from a scheme which will allow a few newspaper conglomerates to take over TV companies? Norris did not explain.

The other two members of the BMIG — the *FT* and *Grauniad* — were also pleased to see that their heavy-handed lobbying had paid off. "Bigger can be beautiful," a *Grauniad* leader argued — which must have surprised readers who assumed the paper was rather hostile to vast corporations.

Times readers, however, were given an entirely different picture. The paper's front-page story included copious quotes from a statement by its proprietor. "The message is stop investing in expansion," Murdoch complained, bitterly attacking "this supposedly free-enterprise pro-competition government."

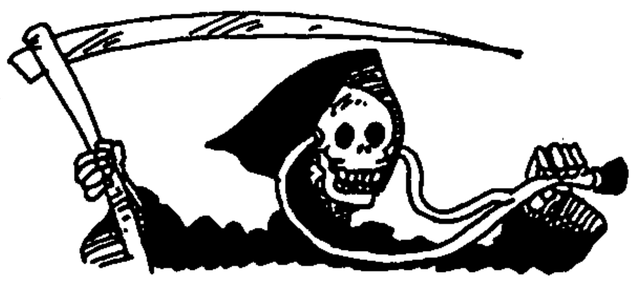
By an amazing coincidence, the *Times*'s leader-writers agreed with their boss. "The long-awaited paper was a triumph for lobbyists from TV and newspaper groups which want to buy and sell one another," they thundered, implying that Murdoch himself would never stoop to such foul practices as lobbying, still less buying and selling. "Stephen Dorrell's proposals on media ownership display every sign of the muddle, weakness and defeatism that are this Conservative government's best-known trademarks."

Following the example of the BMIG, the *Times* concluded with a threat of its own: John Major must withdraw the proposals "before Mr Blair shows himself as the party leader more favourable to competition, free enterprise and creative business."

A day later, the *Sun* weighed in with an almost identical comment. "Perhaps," it suggested menacingly, "Tony Blair understands the free market better..."

This leaves the prime minister in a quandary. If he proceeds with the green paper, the Murdoch press may give Blair an easy ride at the next general election; if he drops the proposals, he can say goodbye to any chance of enthusiastic endorsement from the *Mail* and the *Telegraph*. Which way will he jump? We shall see. But one thing's for certain: his ultimate decision will have bugger-all to do with "giving viewers and readers increased choice" — and everything to do with saving his own skin.

"It's not a gun in my pocket — I'm pleased to see you"



DOING THE ROUNDS

LIFT maintenance is top of the agenda at London's St Thomas' hospital after one containing a fibrillating patient "slipped" eight floors before the emergency brakes stopped it. Fortunately, the emergency resuscitation team was in there too, and was able to tend to the cardiac arrest using drugs passed through a small gap in the doors, which had jammed. Unfortunately, the patient died.

● THE **University College of London Hospital trust board** has decided to solve the bed crisis in Camden by closing the remnants of Middlesex, University College and Elizabeth Garrett Anderson hospitals, and the Hospital for Tropical diseases. These will be replaced by "an exciting new hospital development" with a hundred fewer beds. Meanwhile, surgical clinical services manager Maia Rand has endeared herself to the workforce by disciplining staff nurse David Carr for organising a union meeting on April 4 in defiance of a UCLH "ban" invoked retrospectively on April 5. This victimisation surely has nothing to do with Mr Carr's outspoken attacks on the trust's dangerous multiskilling proposals (*Eyes passim*).

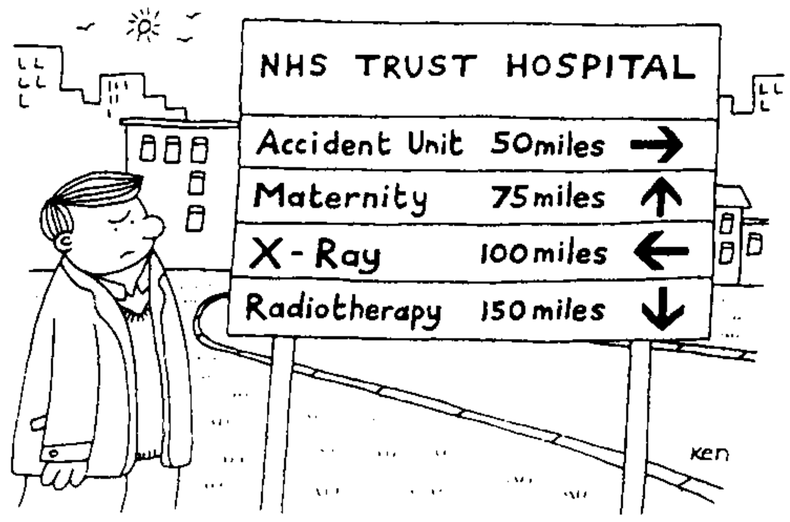
● ON May 10, 1995, rotund health minister John Bowis made reassuring noises in a Commons debate on the bed provision for mental illness. "The beds are there, but we must ensure that they are the right ones. There are 20,000 acute beds and 80,000 long term ones, as there have been over the past decade, but they are in different places. That is good news — provided those beds are everywhere, to meet the range of need." Mr Bowis neglected to mention that many of the beds are either already occupied or on closed wards, and they certainly aren't everywhere. It's common for there to be no acute admission beds at all in the south of England, with severely mentally ill patients having to be detained in casualty departments for up to 36 hours while doctors try to locate a bed miles away, or failing that a prison cell. Some suicidal and dangerous patients have absconded while waiting and others who would have accepted voluntary admission to a local unit have to be sectioned because they dont want to go to a distant unit.

● DR Paula Kilbane is chief executive of Belfast's East health and social services board. She is also a non executive director of Grafton Recruitment, which has recruited staff into the healthcare sector since 1993. As Dr Kilbane put it: "Full details of these matters were made available to the Board at a public meeting in March 1995 and were not considered to present any conflict of interest."

● **NORTH West regional health authority** has proudly announced that it is the only region in the country where no more patients are waiting more than 12 months for treatment as a result of a £15 million initiative. Unfortunately, the regions consultants have rather soured things by revealing that the target has been achieved by cutting corners on patient care and flouting NHS Executive guidance. Continuity of care was disrupted by the removal of patients from consultants' waiting lists without their consent, and operations were farmed out to a private cataract clinic which used non-accredited surgeons. As ophthalmologist Anthony Dunne put it: "Some patients have been operated on with less than satisfactory results."

● DUNCAN Walker, a cardiothoracic surgeon at Leeds's **Killingbeck hospital**, claims he has been a victim of a witch hunt after alleging that fellow surgeon Unnikrishnan Nair had accepted a bribe to move a patient up the waiting list (*Eyes passim*). The allegations were never proved, and Mr Nair has been reinstated after suspension. Mr Walker remains adamant that in December 1994 he was offered £2,500 to fiddle the list by a GP, who told him that Mr Nair had accepted such an offer previously. Thus far the GP has escaped investigation. Mr Walker's consultant colleagues have now declared he no longer commands their "support and confidence" and the trust has written to them inviting "comments" about his work. Altogether not the happiest working atmosphere.

● **POWYS health care trust** is currently pursuing a tough pay policy for its staff and has naturally decided to furnish its top officers with tough cars to keep up the image. Carl Clowes, director of



medical services, and Filip Wisnieuski, director of nursing and operations, are both very pleased with their Land Rover Discoveries at £19,500-£28,000 each to the tax payer.

● IN MARCH 1990, **Oxfordshire health authority** decided to dispense with the services of finance director Colin Jones because "he was not really performing at the standard needed at the time". Mr Jones's reward for his sub-standard performance was a £149,000 severance payment (£100,000 after tax) and a nice letter from the then general manager David Perry; "The payment might be more than our strict legal liability in that we wanted to act as a good employer." The health authority was at that time £1.4 million in debt and cutting jobs and beds for epileptic children and cancer patients at Sobell house hospice. Mr Jones stepped into a £48,000-a-year chief executive post at Nuffield Orthopaedic hospital. The fact that it has taken five years for the information to surface, and then only after a leak, is a fine example of just how accountable the NHS is.

● **PRESTON acute hospitals trust** has sacked Rosemary Nonkin, Royal Preston hospital's operations manager, after discovering all her qualifications were bogus. Mrs Nonkin fibbed about her date of birth, nurse identification number, master's degree from New York university and certificate in business administration from Harvard business school. She was given the job of presiding over a £6 million budget in January, despite being unable to produce her certificates at the interview. As trust chair Carolyn Johnson put it: "How sad we can no longer accept qualifications on trust."

'MD'

DOWN ON THE FARM

SIR Jerry Wiggin's highly regarded services to democracy have again been in evidence, as he guides his Agriculture Select Committee through the maze of evidence he is hearing on nerve-gas based organophosphorus pesticides (OPs).

But so gentle is the pace of the enquiry that there has been some concern at the easy ride being given to the Director and Chief Executive of the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD), Dr Mike Rutter (*Eye* 871).

In an attempt to beef up the questioning and put Rutter on the spot, some of the victims of the VMD's willingness to license deadly poisons have been seeking help from friendly MPs, asking them to place more penetrating questions with the committee.

This initiative has met with very little success. This is not least because, according to one informed source: "They do have a rather peculiar way of operating on that committee and the questions are somewhat restricted in advance." It seems that all questions have to be cleared through Sir Jerry.

Of course, it is only right and proper that the MPs fielding questions are the ones actually responsible for them and are not simply putting their names to other MPs' questions. How lucky the committee is to have Sir Jerry, of such unquestionable integrity, who is able to keep his members on the straight and narrow.

DROOPY Willie Waldegrave's Maffia certainly did not receive a warm welcome in Oxford Crown Court last week, where they were supporting a blundering meat inspector in a cruelty conviction appeal.

According to the Maffia, Mr Anthony Barclay, and two expert deer farmers, Major Michael and Mrs Joanna Maxwell, had caused "unnecessary cruelty" to four during a cull in October last year. Before Thame magistrates, they had swiftly been found guilty and fined nearly £6000 between them.

At the Oxford appeal, however, it transpired that the "cruelty" had arisen when Mr Barclay had allowed a meat inspector, Malcolm O'Hare, from South Oxford District Council (SOD) to witness a cull, the inspector never having seen one carried out before.

Arriving late, when eight animals had already been shot, O'Hare had driven to the edge of the field where the remaining animals had been penned. He had crossed the fence and walked through the field, "spooking" the animals, who had then started rushing around and bashing themselves against fences in an attempt to put distance between themselves and the inspector.

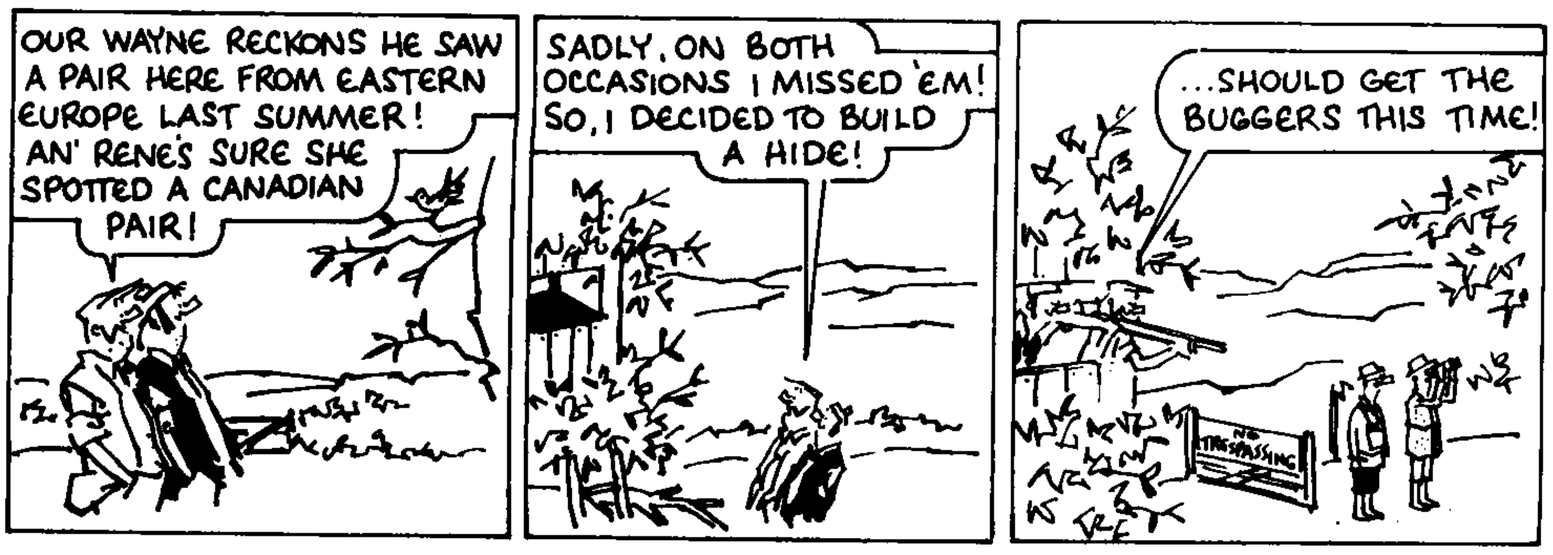
Unused to the behaviour of deer in this situation, and unaware of the havoc he had caused, O'Hare had been "disturbed" by what he saw and had reported to his SOD superiors, whereupon the Maffia were called in to prosecute.

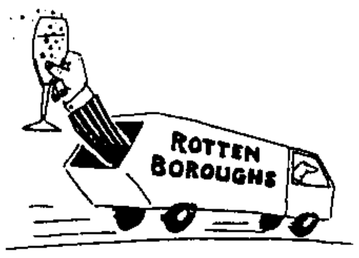
Without taking statements from anyone present except the "disturbed" and inexperienced O'Hare, the Maffia launched off on the trail which was to lead them to Oxford. There, Judge Charles Harris criticised the Maffia for taking the case and dismissed out of hand. He awarded full costs to Mr Barclay and the Maxwells, amounting to over £50,000.

The Maffia are "considering the implications of the judgement", as well they might.

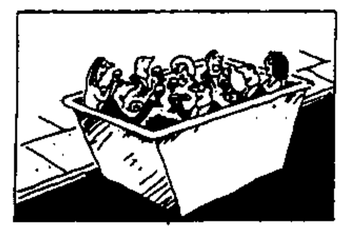
'New Muckspreader'

Old Macdonald


ALBERT
OUR WAYNE RECKONS HE SAW A PAIR HERE FROM EASTERN EUROPE LAST SUMMER! AN' RENE'S SURE SHE SPOTTED A CANADIAN PAIR!
SADLY, ON BOTH OCCASIONS I MISSED 'EM! SO, I DECIDED TO BUILD A HIDE!
...SHOULD GET THE BUGGERS THIS TIME!
NO TRESPASSING



THE
Rotten Borough Advertiser



SUPERMARKET FORCES

TESCO, the supermarket giant, has never recovered from being turned down by the Tory council in Wandsworth, south London, over plans for a monstrous supermarket (plus 586 homes and 800 parking places) on the site of the old Tooting Bec hospital.

So three years later it is trying again — with a very similar plan. Normally it wouldn't stand a chance: even Wandsworth councillors can see there is no point in developing three town centres and then plonking a supermarket outside all of them.

But Tesco has two things going for it. Its PR consultant is Charles Barker, which has employed one David Fanthorpe as the man to persuade the council (Fanthorpe was a Wandsworth Tory councillor in 1989). And Tesco is the family firm of the former leader of the only other Tory citadel in central London: Lady Porter, ex-queen of Westminster.

Meanwhile in Sydenham an old British Gas site has been bought by Sainsbury's for a reputed £1 million an acre. Labour-controlled Lewisham council did not oppose the development despite the party's national stance against out-of-town retailing and the accusation by Frank Dobson, environment spokesman, that British Gas is "more interested in profiteering than in protecting the public" in its development of old sites.

Despite Sainsbury's "Towards a Cleaner Environment" slogan it is the environmental repercussions of the hypermarket planned on the 26-acre site that are most worrying. The site is known to have been heavily contaminated by the production of coal gas, and chemicals present are thought to include cyanide, toluene, phenols and other cancer-related goodies.

British Gas was responsible for cleaning up (*sic*), but two independent reports question the methods used. London Waste Regulation Authority also alleges that the site is unsafe as the load from traffic and building was not taken into account when planning permission was given. Meanwhile Lewisham and the LWRA are squabbling over who should monitor the site environmentally. Both say the other is responsible and lawyers will decide.

ELECTION HIGHLIGHTS

TORY Alison Ward was elected in Mendip District, Somerset, by 65 votes after Angela Yeoman, millionaire boss of Foster Yeoman quarries and a big local employer, put out a leaflet saying Ward was "pro-quarrying" while her Liberal opponent was "Friends of the Earth and anti-quarrying".

It was "essential" for quarry jobs to vote Tory, she said. The Lib Dems have called in the police. Meanwhile Tories David Collins, Geoffrey Dillingham and Thomas Kenneally were thrashed in **Luton's South Ward**, despite a last-minute racialist leaflet bawling "NO TO ASIAN ONLY FLATS". The leaflet carried the Tory torch and was printed by the Tory agent, J.A. O'Farrell MBE. Dr M.A. Bari, elected for Labour at **Blackburn**, campaigned on "many local issues including health" and described himself as a "specialist in issues of public health". He did not mention his 1980 appearance before the General Medical Council disciplinary committee where he was found guilty of serious professional misconduct for taking £130 from a NHS patient for a private abortion and pocketing £65 of it.

IN BRIEF

CHICHESTER: Careers officers in the sleepy West Sussex town have lost £1.5 million from the county council's education budget. County careers officer Howard Westcott has resigned on "ill-health" grounds, registering as a voluntary patient at a psychiatric hospital; and his assistant Gillian Gatehouse is suspended. None of the events are connected.

MANCHESTER: Ex-KGB officer Oleg Gordievsky has been telling businessmen about the perils of doing business in his former Motherland. Manchester Chamber of Commerce and Industry invited him to speak on organised crime, extortion rackets and other dangers, but he was preaching to the converted. The seminar was held near Moss Side where the organised crime and racketeering make Moscow look tame.

KNOWSLEY: Councillor Ted Grannell, whose son Kevin managed the bankrupt FACE, a furniture recycling company which was supported by a council loan but floundered thanks to new fire regulations governing the combustible stuffing in old furniture, has a new role. Grannell senior will represent the council on Merseyside fire authority.

IS BARMY Bent about to follow in the footsteps of gerrymandering Westminster? The Tory council wants to demolish Wembley's run-down Chalkhill estate and build "traditional" housing where a deck-access concrete jungle now stands. Of course, the poor folk who currently live in Chalkhill (and vote Labour) need to be decamped and council officials have identified a number of potential sites in middle-class parts of Wembley and nearby Kingsbury. But Tory councillors, with one eye on their dwindling popularity, have rethought the scheme and declared the Wembley and Kingsbury sites inappropriate. Instead, the Chalkhillers will have to make do with 115 new flats to be built on land currently occupied by travellers next to the main West Coast railway line in... Neasden. Even though officers have told councillors that the site is "unsuitable for residential development", it has the advantage of being in Labour Neasden.

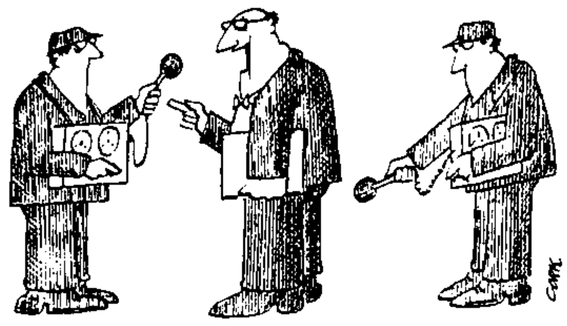
TAKING THE RISE

SOME council officers are now aping top civil servants' in the pay stakes.

In **Camden** chief officers are getting a 15 per cent rise while ordinary white-collar workers get nothing extra and cleaners take a 36 per cent *cut*, which will pay for the bosses' rise.

In **Scotland** the Labour-led Convention of Scottish Local Authorities wants councillors' allowances to rise by at least 110 per cent, putting leaders of the biggest authorities, like Glasgow, on £24,0000-plus a year in exes.

Meanwhile poverty-stricken **Lambeth** is spending £646,000 on 19 new posts while low-paid staff face compulsory tests on their suitability. One manager, Mick McCarthy, has been "assimilated" into one of the new £34,000 posts despite failing his interview.



RED FACE OF THE WEEK

AT a recent official dinner Kirklees Tory councillor Roger Roberts, fuelled by ale and wine, slammed Labour councils for spending too much on immigrants, insulted an Asian waitress, spilled his drink on a fellow councillor and accused Bradford of wasting £15,000 on teaching its Asian mayor's wife English. "I suppose Kirklees will do the same when we get our first Asian mayor — it's a bloody disgrace." Alas Roberts will not be around to find out: voters booted him off the council.

RENFREW WHAT A SCORCHER

THE Labour council in Renfrew has been forced by the Scottish National Party to launch an inquiry into allegations against Ferguslie Community Business (FCB).

The inquiry will look into the purchase by FCB of six holiday caravans costing £150,000 of public money; the purchase of a small cabin cruiser by Strathclyde region for FCB (cost £2,300) used by anglers from Ferguslie Park until its bizarre disappearance (no hands lost) off the island of Rothesay; and the £1.3 million worth of council contracts awarded to the security arm of FCB in the last five years.

It is claimed that no other tender was invited for the majority of these contracts, and that FCB paid its staff £1.60 an hour while charging the council £3.60 an hour. No doubt the all-party committee will find it was all just a misunderstanding.

LUVVIES

English actor Jeremy Irons said playing the villain in *Die Hard III*, Simon, was a much-needed departure from the serious dramatic roles he usually plays.

"I wanted to do a movie that said, 'I'm not that serious'," he said. "It's part of my progression to search to play a whole different range of roles."

Hong Kong Standard

Submitted by Nicholas Sampson.

An occasional column featuring gems from the acting profession. £10 paid for entries.

Letters

Off hand

Sir,

In EYE *872 your front cover "jokes" that Goldsmith's daughter might have her hand cut off for shoplifting.*

Sir James need have no worry, for this is impossible in Islamic Law. The cutting-off of hands applies only to the stealing, secretly and by stealth, of property which is well-guarded. Thus shoplifting is not a crime in Islamic Law. If someone can't be bothered to secure his property, then the law will not intervene!

It seems that your literary comedians cannot make any joke about Islamic Law, without demonstrating complete ignorance. Equivalent ignorance would be demonstrated about English Law if someone joked that a man might go to Broadmoor for parking on a double yellow line. I doubt if anyone would hoot at such a joke!

Yours sincerely,
DR MUHAMMAD HAROON,
Director, The Raza Academy

P.S. I thought your covering the anti-Muslim hysteria over the Oklahoma bombing was absolutely superb! Please accept the thanks of the Muslims!

The way to the Forum

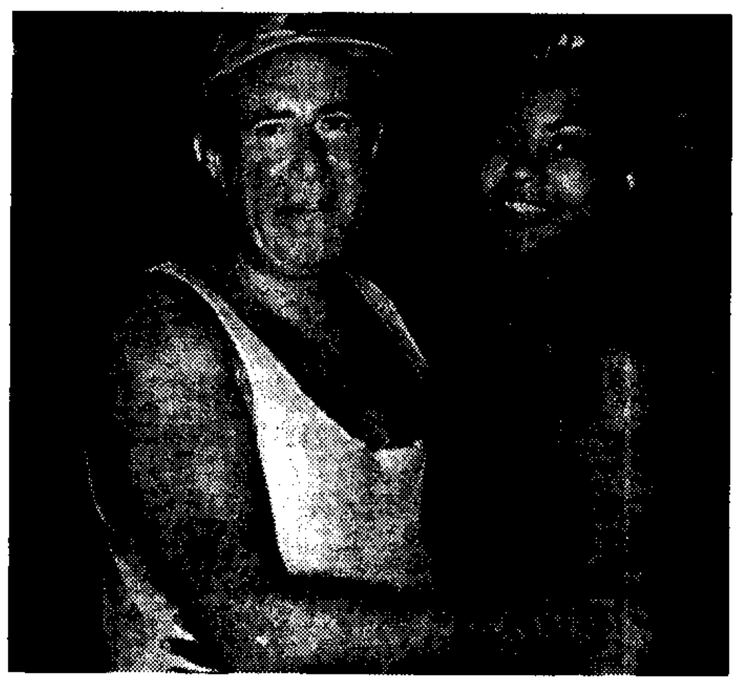
Sir,

You really have got yourselves into a stew (Brum Trifle, EYE *871). I am not a member of the Pakistan Forum. The Forum has no directors, merely postholders, and I am not a postholder either. Nor have I ever been guest speaker at the "lavish lunches" you describe.*

There are nine forums in the City, representing the major minority ethnic communities which make up around 21% of Birmingham's population. All these groups — and that includes the Pakistan Forum — provide accounts to Birmingham City Council annually, as required as a condition of funding. There is no annual grant, simply a budget allocation for each forum to cover fixed costs for a development worker and accommodation.

The assertion that I have contacted the Chair of the Pakistan Forum, Khawaja Mohammed Shafique (who, incidentally, is not a member of the Labour Party) 33 times in a month on my mobile phone is a complete fabrication. What is more, I pay for all my personal calls myself.

Yours sincerely,
CLLR MUHAMMAD AFZAL,
Birmingham City Council.



East meets vest

Sir,

I believe that I have spotted another PRIVATE EYE *mistake. In* EYE *872, featuring the happy announcements of Imran Khan and the fragrant Ms. Goldsmith, the photograph of the two of them on the Letters Page was printed as a negative!*

The hilarious result of this error is that the elderly Khan, resplendent in his vest and baseball cap, appears to be almost Scottish, while his youthful bride looks like an Asian babe!!

Yours,
TIM BENBOW,
St Anthony's College, Oxford.

An exterminator writes

Sir,

I write in response to the illustration on page 10 of EYE *871 of Mr John Birt as a Dalek. I speak for a number of my colleagues in saying that I find this a very upsetting image. How are we to remain the superior beings in the Universe with this sort of slander continually resurfacing? It's not easy, I can tell you. Many of the younger ranks are very sensitive about all this.*

Love and kisses,
THE DALEK SUPREME,
Skaros.

Lookalike

Baker

Margoyles

Sir,

American director Steven Spielberg is, I believe, involved in the production of a film version of Dr Who. If former Doctor Tom Baker is not interested in reprising his successful television part, perhaps Mr Spielberg might be persuaded to audition Baker's doppelganger, the equally exuberantly coiffured Miriam Margoyles, for the title role?

I am sure she would be a great success.

Yours,
ENA B. TARDIS,
London.

Not a lot

Sir,

Now that Lloyds has compensated some of those who failed to make a quick buck after "investing" their hard-earned money, will Camelot now compensate the rest of us?

Yours faithfully,
NICK JENKINS,
Upavon, Wiltshire.

Police stationery

Sir,

*I read with interest the article in your "HP sauce" section (*EYE *871) which suggests that the MoD police be made redundant.*

This obviously well-researched and well-balanced article states "Their main success seems to be in harassing junior Civil Servants for stealing paper clips and envelopes."

Could this be the same MoD Police who investigated and jailed the managing director of ASTRA Holidays? An event made much of at the time by your publication and again more recently in your sympathetic treatment of Jonathan Aitken's connection with the ASTRA subsidiary BMARC?

Surely not?

Yours faithfully,
C.C. ROGERS,
Corsham, Wilts

Wet painters

Sir,

Nice to see, from the Marquesa's criticism of John Major's choice of paintings, that she has exquisite taste in art. The very idea that a painting of a couple from Bradford could have any merit! She, like most TELEGRAPH*-reading former public schoolboys, clearly appreciates that what marks a painting out as good or bad is its subject.*

Those ignorant sods on the Continent have never appreciated this. In their galleries, I have seen paintings of potato pickers by a ginger-headed Dutchman, and of his own garden by a fat Frenchman!

If only they could be shown some of the nice landscapes in, say, Bucks or Surrey, I am sure they would soon come to their senses.

Yours,
TOM JOHNSTONE,
Greengates, Bradford

Hair do's and don'ts

Sir,

Granted: Julie Burchill is awful. She is obnoxious, arrogant, gratuitously confrontational and self-obsessed. Her prose is drearily repetitive and self-referential to the point of tedium. But to criticise her on the grounds of her sexual preference for women is bigoted in the extreme. To "wittily" change her name to "Julie Bulldyke" is even worse. And quite why you feel the need to report that her new partner is "crew-cutted" escapes me. I can only assume that this marks a new trend in EYE *journalism: "People in the news and their partners' haircuts." Or is it rather that as long as you carry on emphasising the stereotyped public images of lesbians and gays, you won't have to worry about the sexuality of your beer-drinking, back-slapping, "macho" male associates (I presume most of them are men).*

One final point: did it ever occur to you that the reason why Charlotte Raven was nicknamed "Myra Hindley" at university might be that she was subject there to the same prejudiced attitudes and institutionalised fear which are so blatantly displayed in your piece? No, probably not.

Yours man-hatingly
KATHLEEN STOCK,
Exeter College, Oxford.

Jobs for the boyo

Sir,

I noticed that Simon Knighton, Director of Business in the Community in Wales, claimed, in your last issue, that the article on Derek Morgan was "somewhat inaccurate" because Mr Morgan was not associated with them.

May I point out that either Mr Knighton is a recent appointee to the job, or he has a short memory, as my 1992 copy of "VIPs in Wales" lists Mr Derek Morgan as a member of, er, Business in the Community in Wales.

Yours sincerely,
JIM GRIFFITHS,
Rhymney, Mid Glamorgan.

I-SPY

The Hague

Cyprus

Submitted by Richard Beckett. £10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

Fellow's feelings

Sir,

re: "Books and Bookmen", EYE *871,*

Your piece on the UEA Writing Fellow Carole Morin is malicious and grossly inaccurate.

Carole Morin was appointed by a formal panel of the university. Her husband Don Watson did not take part in the panel's vote; our decision was reached on the grounds of the quality of her writing, her teaching experience, and her performance in the interview — that is, on the usual ground for making this annual appointment.

Mr Watson's involvement was thus rather less than in other years, but not a lot less, since the Eastern Arts Association contributes only a small proportion of the funding for this post (so is not, as your piece implies, in a position ever to call the shots).

As for Ms. Morin's performance of her duties: she is not employed to teach the MA Creative Writing students — that is no part of her brief. (Indeed, we are currently employing someone quite different, Russell Cellyn Jones, to teach them.) Carole Morin has been teaching undergraduates for us, and arranging readings by visitors, with great success, as she is contracted to do.

As for the question of whether she and her husband are cohabiting: all our Writing Fellows are given a flat on the campus, and often live with partners, sometimes even spouses, not in itself a cause for scandal. Mr Watson has no access to university office facilities.

Yours sincerely,
LORNA SAGE,
University of East Anglia.

Sir,

I certainly wouldn't have married a man with no power but I'd be careful your source is the full banana — otherwise we may use some of the "healthy profit" from our non-existent London flat to take legal advice about the factual errors in your piece.

Keep up the bad work,
CAROLE MORIN,
University of East Anglia.

Pulling his weight

Sir,

Re: Books and Bookmen, EYE *872.*

Sadly, you are misinformed — Paul Halloran did not threaten me when I rang him about his book being pulled.

He was perfectly charming — as, of course, he always is.

Yours etc,
CHRIS BLACKHURST,
The Independent, London E14.

PS: It is not true that if I don't write this letter he will break my legs.

Richard Demi-john

Sir,

On behalf of my colleagues on the production staff of RICHARD LITTLEJOHN LIVE AND UNCUT, *I feel I must correct a glaring error in your mention of the programme in Media News,* EYE *872. It was not in fact the anti-motorway protestors who were told they could drink as much free beer as they liked in the hour before the programme. It was the presenter.*

Yours hic,
RICHARD LITTLEJOHN,
c/o The Bulldozers Arms, London

Low blow

Sir,

Please be good enough to tell Slicker that Mr Al-Fayed sold the Barker's Centre in Kensington, where Associated Newspapers has its headquarters in Northcliffe House, in 1993. The fact that I haven't troubled to blow away some of the other pipe dreams in his piece does not mean they are not equally wrong of course.

Kind regards.
MICHAEL COLE,
Director of Public Affairs, Harrods Ltd.

Please address letters for publication to Private Eye, 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG or e-mail to strobes@cix.compulink.co.uk (marked "For Publication"). And the Eye's WWW page is now available: http://www.intervid.co.uk/intervid/eye/gateway.html

Colemanballs

£10 paid for contributions

"I think he [Joe Royle] should bring on Amokachi with legs."
DAVID PLEAT, Radio 5
(Paul Booth)

"He's seven seconds ahead and that's a good question…"
DAVID COLEMAN
(Jonathan Macgowan)

"They have opened a Pandora's box of worms."
MICHAL WHITE, Radio Four.
(Dr Robert George)

Martyn Lewis: *Congratulations! Here is your round-the-world air ticket. What are you going to do with it?*
Contestant: *Go round the world.*
BBC2
(Andy Elmer)

"In Japan, I suppose, apples are small bananas compared to rice."
RHOD SHARP, Radio 5 Live
(Ian Goddard)

HOM SAP

BY DAVID AUSTIN

Letter from India

from Our Own Correspondent

SONIA, the Italian-born widow of former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi, is again trying to save her adopted country.

After the recent split in the ruling Congress party, formerly presided over by her husband, by Mrs Indira Gandhi, his mother, and by Jawaharlal Nehru, his grandfather, "Mother India" — as Sonia is affectionately called by some senior Congressmen — has become the arbiter of Indian politics.

In true Italian style, however, the widow from Turin, who only took Indian citizenship after her husband became prime minister, keeps everybody guessing about her true intentions, playing both ends towards the middle. Not only is she the covert force behind dissident ruling Congress party MPs who recently split the party, challenging the ineptness of prime minister Narasimha Rao, but she also enjoys support in the PM's camp.

Scores of Rao supporters, former Rajiv Gandhi loyalists, are peeved with their boss for ignoring the advice proffered by Mother-ji — a suffix of respect — on keeping the party intact. "Mother", who holds no public office and does not openly involve herself in politics, has ordered Rao, through a complicated line of flunkies, to avoid a split in Congress and to work for its unity at all costs. The prime minister's "lukewarm" response considerably irked her into "allowing" the dissidents to do what the wanted.

The dissidents coined a catchy unifying slogan — "Summon Sonia and save India" — which sent the normally immovable Rao into a tizzy. He embarked on a damage limitation exercise. A former state chief minister who was close to Mr Gandhi was hastily summoned to visit "Mother" and later hold a press conference to emphasise his respect for the Gandhi family.

The "Sonia factor" has surfaced repeatedly whenever the ruling party has been in crisis after Rao became prime minister in 1991. It began immediately after Gandhi was killed by a suicide bomber at an election rally in South India and obsequious MPs offered Mother-ji the presidency of the Congress party, founded in 1885 to oppose foreign domination. A few months later Rao's newly elected government allocated one billion rupees ($3.5 million) to the fledgling Rajiv Gandhi Foundation, which dispenses grace and favour to a lucky few.

Both offers were declined, but only after a suitable interval during which Mother-ji shrewdly gauged public criticism. Ever since she has continued to command attention in influential political and public circles, regularly meeting ministers and MPs and holding "durbars" or public meetings for Congress workers twice a week. Even Rao visited her before all cabinet reshuffles, reportedly to get clearance and inquire whether she wanted any of her people in. On at least one occasion she "indicated" her preference for a candidate and the lucrative portfolio he be allotted. It was done.

Mother's close friends say she is content being involved in social work executed through the well-off Rajiv Gandhi Foundation she heads. But some Congress MPs say the foundation is the ideal engine not for Sonia but for Priyanka, her pretty 24-year-old daughter. Presently teaching in a nursery school, the young Miss Gandhi reportedly harbours political ambitions (unlike her older brother, who has been trying for years to graduate).

Party insiders say the foundation's aim of uplifting the poor, promoting literacy and establishing a scientific think tank can easily be translated into political mileage for Miss Gandhi. But other Congressmen, opposed to perpetuating dynastic rule, say Mother-ji is presently inhibited from making any overt political move because of investigations into a $150 million kickback scandal involving defence imports from Sweden which reportedly involved her Italian businessmen friends, some of whom have fled India.

The scandal led to the Congress party's defeat in the 1989 parliamentary elections and Rajiv Gandhi's ousting after he tried, rather obviously, to stymie investigations into it.

Observers, however, say that while Mother intends to remain a potent political force she will soon have to declare herself. For now there's even money on her opting for the winning side. As they say in Italy, the only people who obtain power are those who crave it. And that she certainly does.

FUNNY OLD WORLD

o "It amazes me that Lawrence Hanratty is still alive," Dr Mahinderjit Singh told reporters in Manhattan. "There is a saying that 'no matter how unlucky you are, there's always someone worse off than yourself,' and it's true. There *is* someone worse off, and he's called Lawrence Hanratty."

Dr Singh, a psychiatrist, then chronicled the series of misfortunes that have afflicted his patient, formerly a New York carpenter. "In 1984, while on a construction job, Hanratty sawed through a cable and was electrocuted. He lost his nose, and was in a coma for seven weeks. When he came too he was completely disabled and tried to sue the company for using unlicensed electricians, but half way through the case his first lawyer, Jerome Speigleman, was convicted of grand larceny and disbarred. His second lawyer, Benjamin Sergi, worked on the case for six months, then died. Hanratty wasn't told about this for a year, but as soon as he heard he hired a third lawyer, who also died. The fourth law firm promptly lost all his files, then his wife ran off with a lawyer from the firm, and the after-effects of the electrocution affected his heart and liver, causing him to relapse into a coma, during which he technically 'died' three times.

"Recently, things have gotten worse. Last month, he was electrocuted again, by a faulty battery in his wheelchair. A week later, on leaving hospital, a driver smashed into his car and after the police left the accident scene, Hanratty was robbed of his life savings at gunpoint. Insurance company have cut off his benefits, his landlord has evicted him, and he's now been denied all further Medicaid, social security, and welfare payments. Last week, lawyer number five passed away, and as of next month, unless Medicaid agree in writing to continue paying my bills, he won't have a psychiatrist either. What really gets me is that he keeps saying 'there are people much worse off than me', but I know there aren't." *(The Toronto Globe & Mail, 15/4/95. Spotter — Brendan Joseph O'Byrne)*

—o—

o "We are bitterly disappointed and disgusted by this late cancellation," an angry Rolando Navarro told Filipino reporters. "The crucifixion is traditionally the highlight of our Good Friday celebrations. I only hope there is still time to find a suitable replacement for this thoughtless, irresponsible man."

Speaking in the farming village of San Pedro Cutud, north of Manila, festival organiser Navarro explained what had happened. "For centuries, we have crucified a Filipino man or woman each year, as part of our Easter rites. It is a great honour to be chosen, and locals vie for the chance to be nailed to the cross in imitation of our Lord. But a few years ago, a Belgian nun called Godelieve Rombaut asked us to crucify her instead, so we did. It was a great success, and this year when another Belgian, Roland Brauwers, said that he wanted to be crucified too we were happy to allow

him to re-enact the passion of Jesus Christ our saviour.

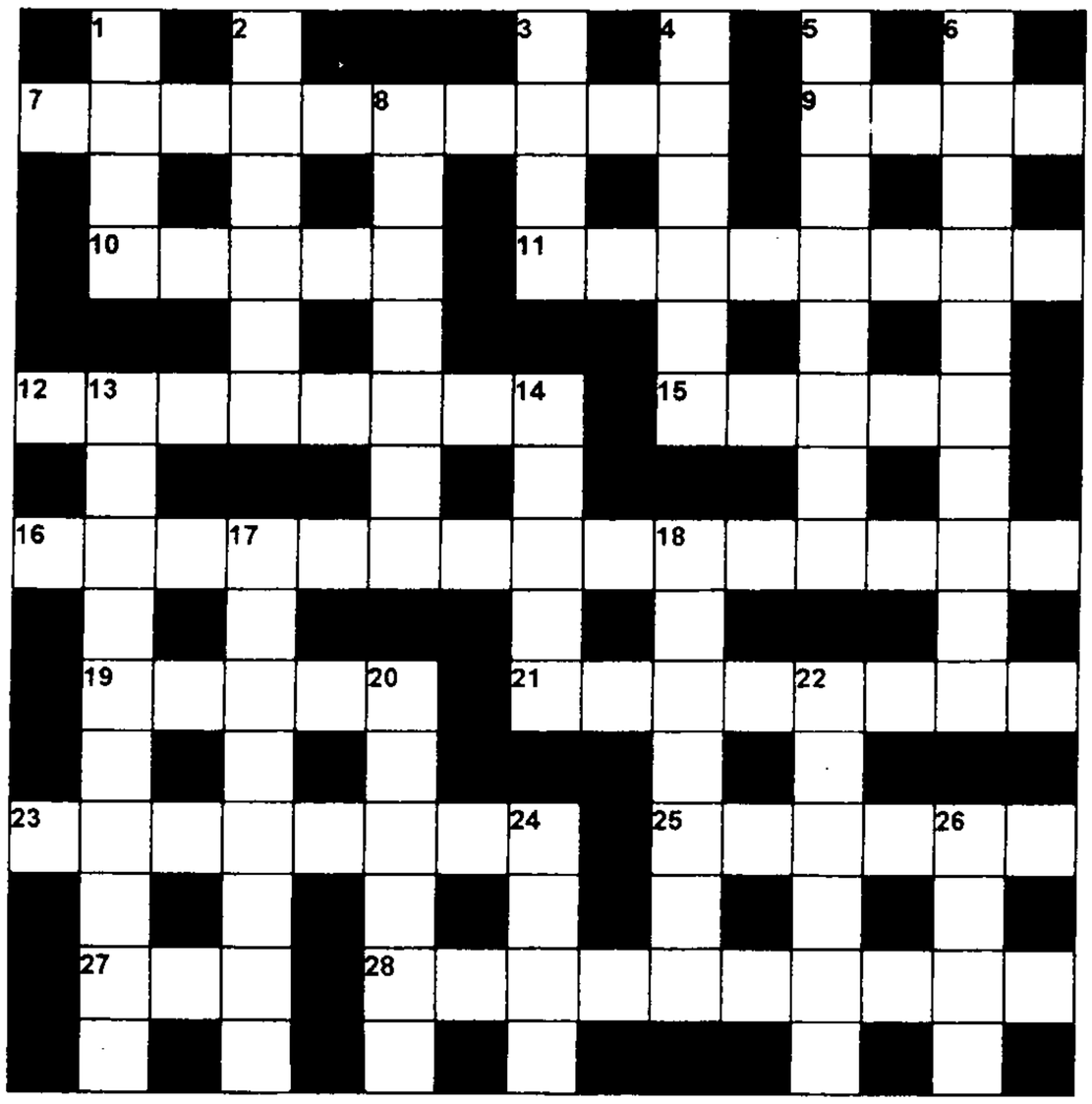
"But this morning, only days before the ceremony is due to begin, I received this letter from him, saying he regrets that he cannot take part 'due to a heavy head cold, which could be a problem on the cross, what with not having access to hankies or the like,' but that he hopes to be alright to be crucified next year, I phoned his hotel in Manila and they said he had departed hurriedly at the weekend after emptying the contents of the minibar into his briefcase, and without paying his bill. I tell you, if he comes here next year expecting us to crucify him, we'll bloody lynch him. Typical Belgian." *(China News, 13/4/95. Spotter — Simon Swanwick)*

Compiled by

Victor Lewis-Smith

EYE CROSSWORD 29 by Cyclops

£100 Winner MICHAEL DIXON



ACROSS

7 Call Blair the head of an unprincipled gang? (10)
9 He picks a team of directionless nuts (4)
10 Something of the bitch in Diana? Language! (5)
11 (see 16)
12 Group Four has had more than its quota of piss poor cases outside (8)
15 Strain is about to hit La Bollard (5)
16/1/11 Top civil servant's lying... (5,10,4,3,5)
19 ...in Massachusetts city address, cold — a magnet for visitors (5)
21 A nerdish leader has to bow before one Conservative of a rebellious nature (8)
23 Traditionally beneath some lordly arsehole (8)
25 Pot? That is a controversial drug (6)
27 'No' to the community as a place for exhibitionists (3)
28 Shadow Tory finally to slate Sky topless carry-on (5,5)

DOWN

1 (see 16)
2 The business of attaching one to low-down duck's arse (6)
3 Cut out to do a Piers Morgan, for instance (4)
4 Shorts accepted by defenders perhaps (6)
5 PM ousted finally by Rabin, for instance? (8)
6 Celebs refuse a stupid git outside (10)
8 Dire magazine's look of the bad speller (4,3)
13 Fertility rating of Dracula, maybe, after sulphur put on hairdo (5,5)
14 Bugger King inside with a banger (5)
17 Burning rubber as a vindictive act (8)
18 Speaking grandly, there's sod all right with a conservative! (7)
20 Indifference makes one stroke gutless Hattersley (6)
22 Come to a sticky end as a fornicating male? (6)
24 Charles might be forcing ma to go! (4)
26 Thieving no good deserting snorting columnist (4)

£100 prize to first correct solution opened on 9.06.95. Entries to "Crossword", Private Eye, 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG.

Solution to Crossword No. 28

ACROSS: 7/16 Sleaze factor 8 Riot gear 10 Commons 11 Pronto 12 Bribe 14 Raspberry 16 Idi Amin 17 Plotter 20 Alan Clark 22 Oprah 24 Smarmy 25 McEnroe 27 Heritage 28 Bishop.

DOWN: 1 Black Rod 2 Maam 3 (See 26) 4 Tristar 5 Vox populi 6 (See 7) 9 Goose-step 13 Brain drain 15 Bill Wyman 18 Eva Peron 19 Premier 21 Lumley 23 Serbs 26/3 Ross Perot.

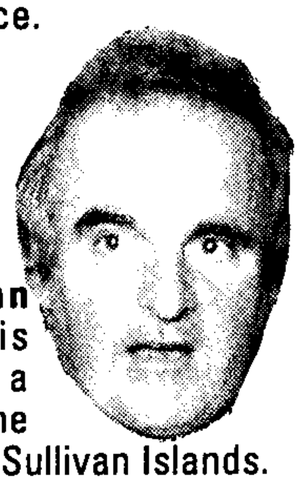
RUGBY SPECIAL

SIX TO WATCH

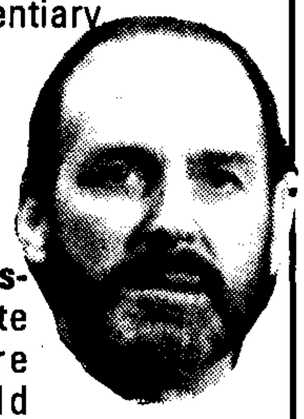
An Eye guide to the top rugger stars who are making history in South Africa.

Jonas van der Kaffirbasher, 27. Rumbabwe's exciting lock forward plays for Mugabe University, where he is a graduate in Crowd Control Studies and is sponsored by the secret police.

Juan Carlos Galtieri. At 48, probably the grand old man of Argentinian rugby. Recently released from prison after serving a five-year sentence for crimes against humanity. Played wing-three-quarter for Buenos Aires State Penitentiary.



Sir Balogan O'Halloran. This 20-stone No. 8 is a legend in his home in the Gilbert and Sullivan Islands. He trains on fermented kiwi fruit and turtle steaks, of which he consumes an estimated 3 tons a day. Balogan has been known to crush opponents to death in the scrum with his stomach alone.



Demosthenes Christodoulous, 37. Crete has never before made the World Cup and their presence this year is largely due to this 7ft master of the line-out. A taxi-driver by trade, Christodoulos personifies the amateur traditions of rugby in Crete — he has no idea how to play the game. *(That's enough ones to watch — Ed.)*

ARE THEY **GUILTY**?

The EYE says

THE JURY will decide and it is no business of ours to comment.

SOAP OPERA LATEST

BLONDE BOMBSHELL TO RETURN

by Our Showbiz Staff
Ken Borelow

"I AM coming back" pledged the nation's number one soap queen, following stories that she was to spend more time with her grandchildren.

For over 25 years buxom, outspoken Mag Goodyears had kept the nation entranced with her no-nonsense common sense approach to life.

Lynch Major

To everyone's delight she weathered many crises over the years, including being let down by wastrel son Mark and putting up with the Andy-Capp antics of golf-playing husband Denis.

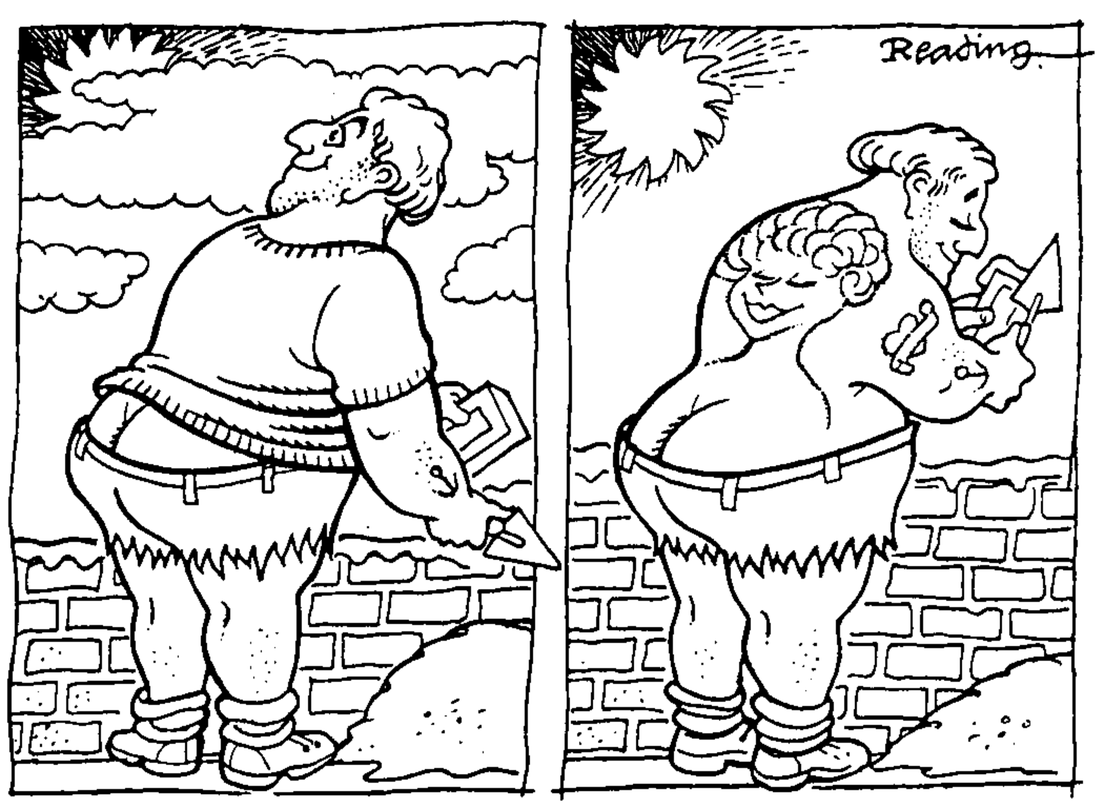
Then she quit. Or was it all a mistake?

Now she says she wants to be back "in the Street".

Ravers Return

And the nation is behind her, said a spokesman for the soap. "We have 1000s of letters every week from ordinary people like Sir Peregrine Worsthorne asking for Mag to be reinstated as the soap's central character."

He showed me a typical letter which said simply: "The present cast are second-rate boring nonentities. There is only one way to save the show. Bring me back at once. Yours, Mystic Mag."



The Secret DIARY OF JOHN MAJOR aged 47¾

Sunday

I am not inconsiderably beside myself with rage at Mrs Thatcher's latest attempt to attack me. "It is like the film about the shark" said my wife Norman. "Just when you think it is safe to go into the water, she appears again with her big teeth, saying you're no good." "It is not at all like that" I replied in my special angry-with-Mr-Hanley voice. "For a start, I am not at all frightened of her. And secondly, she comes out of the water and writes articles in the *Sunday Times*, which the shark never did." "You're right," said Norman. "The comparison doesn't work, because in the film everyone doesn't prefer the shark to the lifeguard."

"I have better things to do" I told her, "than to sit around here discussing sharks." I have decided to take absolutely no notice of anything Mrs Jaws says, and I have told Mr Meyer to brief all the press to this effect.

Monday

I have stayed up nearly all the night writing down all the reasons why Mrs Thatcher is wrong about me, in a new book from Ryman's, which I have codenamed "Mrs Shark". She says:

1. I am weak over Europe. NOT TRUE. We stood up to them over Maastricht and only agreed to do what they had wanted at the last minute. Also, Mr Hurd and I threw out the Belgian federalist M. Dehaene for President, and it was entirely due to us that we got Mr Santer instead, who is a federalist from Luxembourg.
2. I am weak on law and order. NOT TRUE. Who else would have the courage to introduce an ID card, even though we are not going to do it yet?
3. All my other policies are pathetic too. NOT TRUE. If they are so pathetic, why has Mr Blair tried to copy them all? No one says he's pathetic.

Anyway, enough of Mrs Thatcher. I am not going to waste any more time on showing how everything she says is wrong.

Tuesday

Who does Mrs Thatcher think took us into the disaster of the ERM? It was her, that's who. When Mr Hurd and the then-Chancellor (me) went to tell her that Britain should join, she pathetically gave in. She should have stood up to us, just like I stood up to Herr Kohl and all the others.

Talking of which, I today had a historic call from the new President of France, Mr Monsieur Chirac, who has just been staying with Mr Herr Kohl for a summit conference. He of course wanted to involve me in their top-level discussions. This is how it went:

Chirac: Bonjour, M. Major. Avez-vous lu le *Sunday Times*? Magnifique, non? Quelle dame!

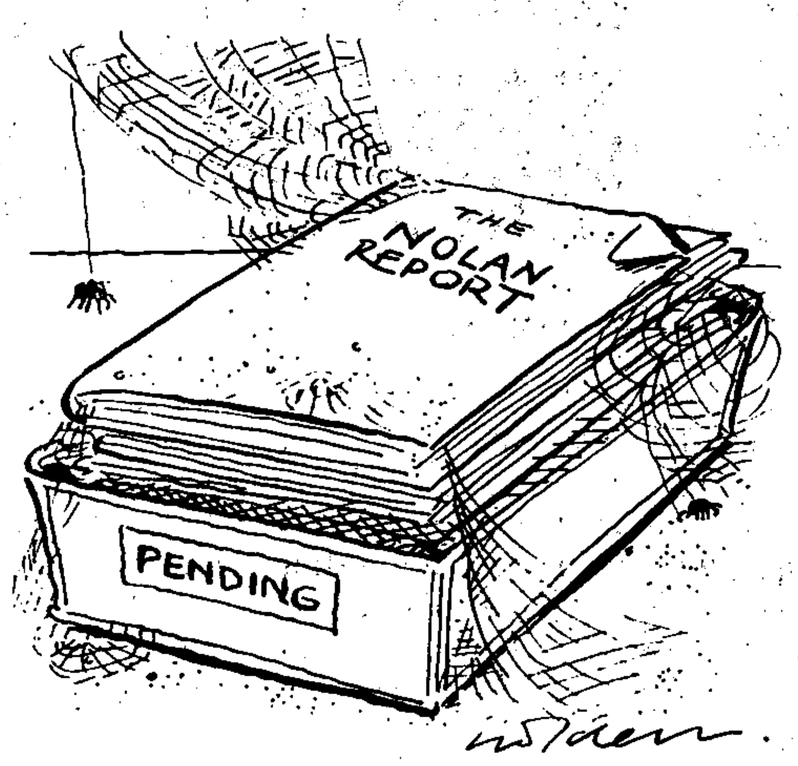
Me: Oh, hullo, Mr President.

Chirac: Herr Kohl et moi, nous avons decidés tous. Comprenez?

Me: Thank you very much for ringing.

Chirac: Ha, ha, ha. Quelle dame...

I think this conversation shows that I am still very much at the heart of Europe. Even if we are going slowly in the fast lane, due to fog, which is after all only prudent in the circumstances.



Wednesday

No one is talking about Mrs Thatcher any more, which is a relief. They are all talking about Mr Lord Nolan, who is the man I appointed last year to stop people talking about sleaze. Mr Nolan has got it wrong when he says that we should introduce new measures to stop MPs cashing in on their position. Firstly people do not go into politics simply to cash in. And secondly, if these kind of measures are introduced, no one will want to go into politics because they cannot cash in. In my judgement, it is most important that the House of Commons should include MPs from the widest range of walks of life — e.g. consultants, management advisers, public relations experts and so forth.

Thursday

The Thatcher affair is now entirely forgotten, though it is very interesting that the one thing Mrs Thatcher does not mention in her list of why my government is so hopeless is Northern Ireland. It is not surprising since I am the one who brought peace to the provinces and she did not. However, I have no intention of using this very good point against her, because I am not in the least interested in Mrs Thatcher and her new book Jaws II. Oh no.

Friday

We have lost another by-election in Scotland but it is not a historic day by any manner of means.

"We may have lost the seat," as Mr Hanley said on the Classic-FM News, "but Mr Blair failed to win it."

This obviously makes it a disaster for Mr Blair rather than us. It is good to see that sometimes Mr Hanley still talks sense!

Saturday

Mr Blair has a silly new idea to get more women into politics. He obviously has no idea what this can lead to (see above).

Sunday

Mrs Thatcher has now announced that she admires Mr Blair. This shows how out of touch she is with the country. After complaining about how disloyal everyone was to her, she has proved that she is more disloyal than everyone put together. And I shall say so. Oh yes.

I said to Mr Hanley: "She is asking people to vote Labour." "I wouldn't worry about it," he told me. "They are going to do that anyway."

Monday

I have had to make a very important decision about Bosnia, which is in Yugoslavia. The Serbians (the ones in Bosnia) have kidnapped 30 British soldiers, which is nearly the whole British Army.

"They must not get away with this," I said to Mr Hurd. "What shall I do?"

Mr Hurd replied: "You do nothing, Prime Minister. I will immediately send out more troops."

"And what will they do?" I asked authoritatively.

"They will withdraw at once along with all the others. This will show the Serbs that we mean business."

As I said to Norman over our breakfast of sauerkraut (which Mr Herr Kohl had given to me in a big jar as a symbol of our special friendship): "I am sending in the troops. This is my Falklands."

"Yes," she said. "Except that we won the Falklands."

Once again Norman has missed the point, just like another woman who I could mention but never do.

Poetry Corner

In Memoriam
Harold Wislon

So. Farewell then
Harold Wilson.

Prime minister and
Statesman.

With your pipe
And Gannex macintosh
You were a
Much-loved figure,

Very similar to Mike
Yarwood.

"The pound in your
Pocket."
That was your catchphrase.

"The white heat of
Technology."
That was another.

"A week is a long time
In politics."
That was the other one.

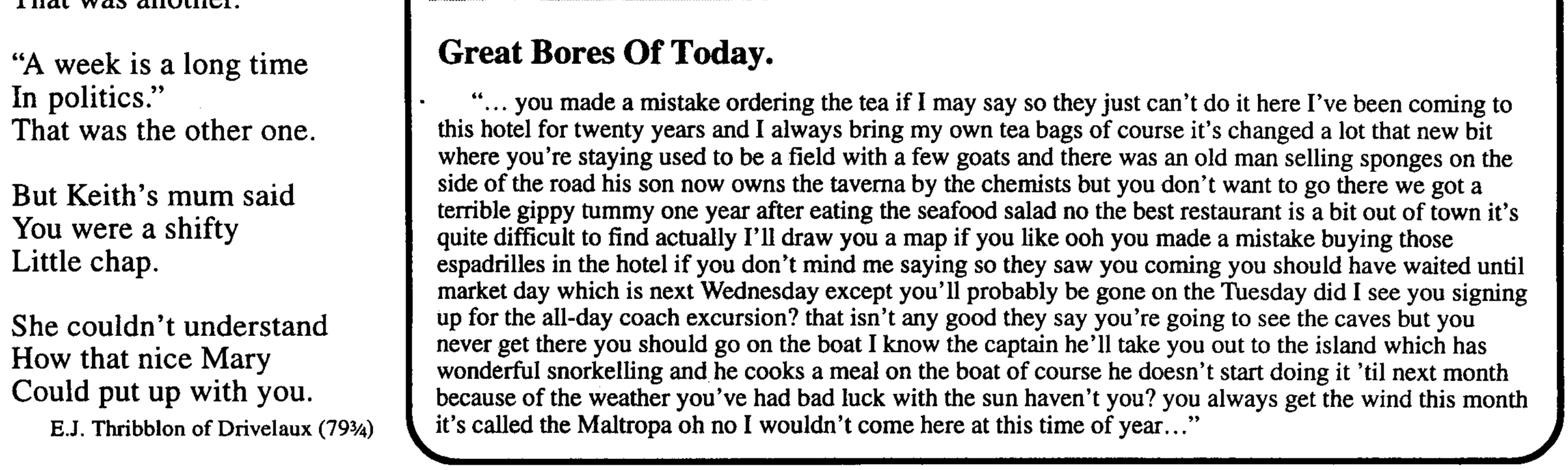
But Keith's mum said
You were a shifty
Little chap.

She couldn't understand
How that nice Mary
Could put up with you.

E.J. Thribblon of Drivelaux (79¾)

Great Bores Of Today.

"... you made a mistake ordering the tea if I may say so they just can't do it here I've been coming to this hotel for twenty years and I always bring my own tea bags of course it's changed a lot that new bit where you're staying used to be a field with a few goats and there was an old man selling sponges on the side of the road his son now owns the taverna by the chemists but you don't want to go there we got a terrible gippy tummy one year after eating the seafood salad no the best restaurant is a bit out of town it's quite difficult to find actually I'll draw you a map if you like ooh you made a mistake buying those espadrilles in the hotel if you don't mind me saying so they saw you coming you should have waited until market day which is next Wednesday except you'll probably be gone on the Tuesday did I see you signing up for the all-day coach excursion? that isn't any good they say you're going to see the caves but you never get there you should go on the boat I know the captain he'll take you out to the island which has wonderful snorkelling and he cooks a meal on the boat of course he doesn't start doing it 'til next month because of the weather you've had bad luck with the sun haven't you? you always get the wind this month it's called the Maltropa oh no I wouldn't come here at this time of year..."


DO YOU KNOW, MY FORTUNE GOT TOLD A FEW WEEKS BACK. I'VE BEEN WORRIED SICK ABOUT IT EVER SINCE.
EVERYTHING SAID ABOUT ME WAS FRIGHTENINGLY ACCURATE AND IN THE FUTURE DISASTER LOOMS I'M AFRAID.
SO WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN TO YOU?
I'M A GONER MATE. MY NUMBER'S UP...
...5 PLACES TO 397! I'LL HAVE THE INLAND REVENUE ALL OVER ME NOW. BLOODY SNOOPING JOURNALISTS!
SUNDAY TIMES BRITAIN'S RICHEST 500
I DID WARN YOU ABOUT UNDER DECLARING YOUR INCOME...

WISLON
The Tributes Flow In

Edward Heath WHEN I was Prime Minister, it has to be said that I did a much better job of it than he did. I particularly remember the way he let me down when I was leading Britain into the European Union, one of my great triumphs, of which there were many. People often said that I was the greatest prime minister of this country and they were right. In addition I am a world class yachtsman, a fine organist and have also written some excellent books about myself.

Woy Jenkins HAROLD was a most agweeable colleague, who enjoyed fine wines, good food and civilised conversation. We wegularly lunched together when he was Pwime Minister. Perhaps his gweatest stwoke of genius was to appoint me Chancellor, in which gweat office of state, it has to be said, I was a twiumphant success.

Paul McCartney THE Sixties were a great time for us. We had a load of hits and that. And we met Harold Wilson, I think. He was a lovely bloke and he knew all our songs and he gave us an OBE because we were the greatest band of all time. Do you want one of my wife's vegetableburgers?

Denis Healey I WAS the first to know that Harold was going to resign, when he told the Cabinet that he had had enough. That was two years before anyone else knew, which I think shows how influential I was.

John Major HAROLD Wilson was a brilliant prime minister, though at the time few people realised it. With his grey hair and glasses, his love of cricket and his vision of a classless society, he was much derided, and he had terrible trouble with the divisions in his party over Europe. Yet history will come to recognise him as the longest-serving minister since Margaret Thatcher.

Tony Blair HAROLD will always be remembered for the way he modernised the Labour party and led it to victory after more than a decade of Tory domination. In my view he was a genius.

Margaret Thatcher I ALWAYS had the greatest possible respect for myself.

Mike Yarwood YOU know... (Contd pp 94-180)

WORLD OF SOCCER

JOY AND SORROW AT NEASDEN BRIDGE

by **E.I. Erewego**, Our Man In The Telephone Kiosk Copying Down The Number Of Miss Spanky 48-36-48

THERE was joy and sorrow at Neasden Bridge last night when convicted midfield legend Vince Wince was released on parole following a successful appeal against his 30-year conviction for grievous bodily harm.

Said the ashen-faced Ron Knee: "Wince has been vindicated. The alleged match and petrol incident with the Dollis Hill fan is now history. Both he and his team-mate Eddie Depardieu are once again free men who can stand on any fans they like *(shurely 'with their heads held high'? Ed)*.

Violent Ince-ident

But there was sorrow as well as joy at Neasden Bridge *(You've done this. Ed)* when it was learnt that Adolf Klingfilm, last year's star summer signing, is to return to his native Bavaria.

Said a distraught fan (Sid Bonkers): "It brings a tear to my eye to bid Auf Wiedersehen to a man who has done more than anything to get Neasden to where they are today — i.e. bottom of the league."

There were tributes however to Klingfilm's legendary skills from chairman Sir Buffy Frobisher OBE.

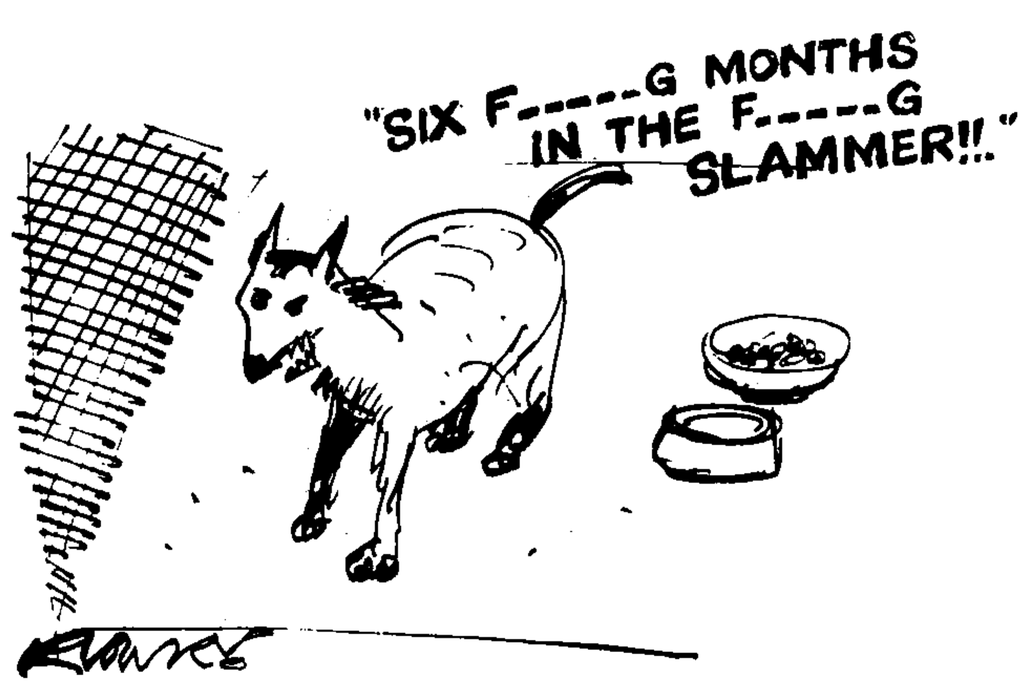
"Next season Adolf will be putting on his familiar black shirt when he rejoins his old club Nazzio. But in his heart he will always be diving into the opponents' penalty box in a Neasden strip. We wish him every success — the money-grabbing, disloyal, two-faced Kraut."

LATE SCORE

Glyndebourne Summer Cup

Tokyo Gasworks 3
(Sushi, Tempora, Sake)
Neasden FC 0

KEPT IN QUARANTINO



RADIO AND TV

Exclusive to all News Programmes

Anna Tharg: And more news is coming in, I'm glad to say, of the appalling coach disaster in which the death toll might even reach 16. So, Colin, down there on the hard shoulder, any more deaths?

Colin: Well, no, actually, we don't have any more news — and the emergency services are doing a tremendous job...

Tharg: Yes, well we'll have to come back to you when there are some more deaths. But meanwhile, we've got Chief Inspector Kettleby here, who is in charge of the rescue operation. Inspector, who's to blame here? Is it the coach operators who've been against installing seat belts? Is it the police, for not insisting on safety barriers? Is it the coach manufacturers for creating death traps? Is it lack of government investment in roads? I mean, people have died here today, so what do you say to that? Shouldn't you be down there yourself, helping to get people out?

Inspector: I was, but you asked me to come into the studio.

Sue McGregor: Leave him alone. It's my turn to ask him who's to blame. Inspector, what everyone wants to know, is just how many people are dead? Can you describe how you felt when you saw all those bodies? I mean, old age pensioners, war veterans, men who survived the trenches and who have now died needlessly on the M4 because someone is to blame. Who is it Inspector? Is it you? Is it Mrs Thatcher? I mean, why hasn't the government done something?

Inspector: Er...

Sue McGhastly: I'm sorry, that's all we've got time for. And if you want to suggest someone to blame for the coach disaster, call Nick Ross on 0891-999999. And now Thought For The Day, with the Chief Atheist.

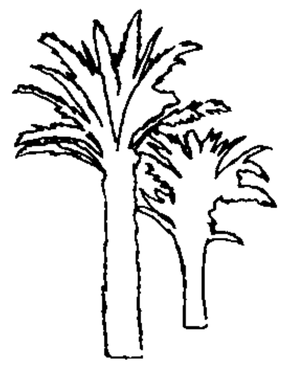
Mr Blenkinsop: Hullo John, hullo Sue. You know, when I heard about this accident, I couldn't help thinking that there must be someone to blame. And naturally I blame God.

(Contd. 94 KHz)

Continuing the hugely popular Sunday Supplement feature you can read exclusively in every paper...

FILMTITS IN CANNES

☺ **Van Damme** it! Some guys have all the luck! Claude's got **Demi Moore** than his fair share of the beautiful girls! It's a **Cin-dy** that he's got Miss **Crawford** as well! There's nothing like a Damme for the Belgian Beefcake!?



☺ It's that French Connection again! Perhaps it's in Mr **Hackman**'s **Genes**!?! Is he just **Scacchi-ng Greta**'s back? Or is he up to White Mischief?

☺ Not so much Reservoir Dogs as Marina Mutts!! That's the message for tough guy actor **Nick Nolte** and new "Pet" **Petula Clark**! I'm sure they're going to be going "Downtown" in Cannes tonight!

☺ Isn't life a beach?! It is for Britain's **Emma Thompson**, the Shakespearean star caught here for once without hubby **Ken**!! 2 piece or not 2 piece, that is the swimsuit question!

☺ A slimline **Arnold Schwarzenegger** flies in with the **Isabella** of the Ball! Miss **Rossellini** of course! Will this affair Terminate here? Or is it all True Lies what they are saying down Cannes way? Hasta la vista – maybe?! *(You're fired – Hasta la vista to you. Ed)*

(That's enough pisspoor captions to dreary film PR photos written by sad hacks who aren't in Cannes)

'WE INHERITED MESS' claim top Tories

by Our Man At Westminster **Lobby Purvis**

LAST night hundreds of Cabinet Ministers queued up to appear on television blaming everything that has gone wrong with the present government on the previous government.

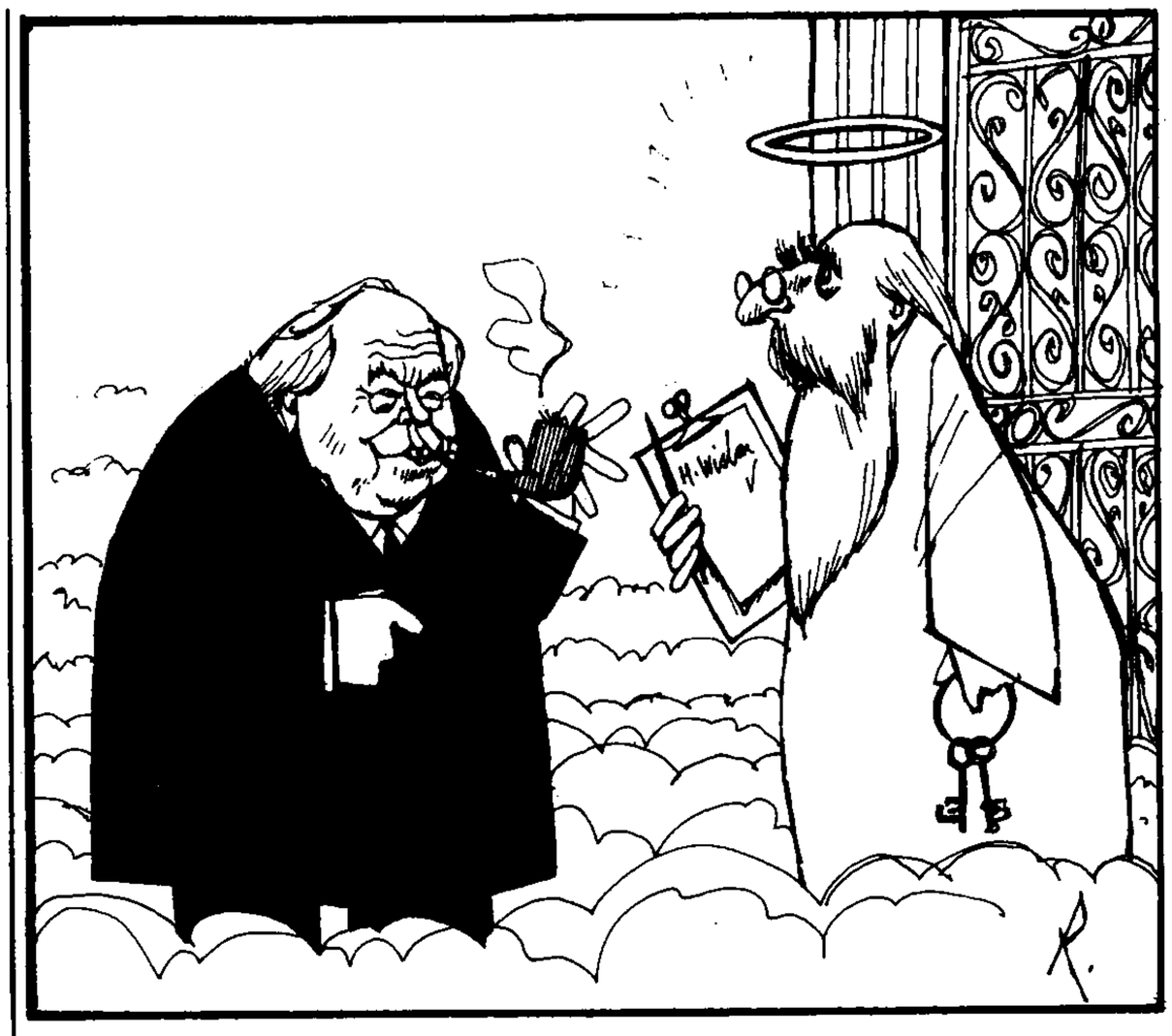
Said Michael Heseltine, Malcolm Rifkind, Kenneth Clarke and someone called Major: "It is all the fault of Mrs Thatcher's government.

"When we came in everything was a complete shambles. Her lot made blunder after blunder over their disastrous twelve years in office. Europe, the pound, tax, inflation, you name it — the Thatcher government made a hash of everything it touched.

"We have spent the last four years trying to undo the appalling mess she left us.

"No wonder we are the most unpopular government in history. It's all thanks to that woman.

"But with any luck we shall soon have another Labour government to blame — and then everything will be back to normal."



"I understand Lord Goodman has come on ahead to fix it up..."

HOUSE OF COMMONS
OFFICIAL REPORT

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

HANZ-Z-Z-ARD

2.32 Emergency Debate on the Threat Posed By Lord Nolan to the Snouts-In-Trough Industry.

Sir Bufton Tufton (Lymeswold, Con.): Mrs Speaker, I am sure you would agree that it is a tremendous tribute to the honour of this House that so many of us — indeed all of us — have taken the afternoon off from our very important consultancies to appear in the Commons.

(Cries of "here, here")

We face what is undoubtedly the greatest threat in the past 800 years to everything which parliament stands for. I refer of course to that right of every Member of this House (especially on our side) to use our positions to make as much money on the side as is humanly possible. This fellow Nolan is attempting to destroy the liberties which we take every week.

(Members wave bank statements amid cries of "String Nolan up!")

Mr Slithy Tove (Sleazewold, Con.): May I ask a simple question, for which incidentally I am only being paid £6000. In view of the outrageous suggestion by Lord Nolan that honourable members are in some way being paid to ask questions, could I ask who was the stupid idiot who first asked Lord Nolan to stick his nose in our trough?

Rt. Hon. John Major (the Prime Minister): In answer to my honourable friend, it was me. When I appointed Lord Nolan it was done with the very highest of motives — i.e. to push sleaze under the carpet until everyone had forgotten about it. What I forgot was that eventually he would produce a report. Therefore I now propose that we should push the report under the carpet instead.

(Huge cheers of relief from Tories and cries of men on mobile phones shouting "It's ok, darling, you can keep the range rover. See you at ten" and "It's OK, sweetybum, you can keep the flat. See you at six")

Grocer Heath (Blubber-on-the-Take, Con.) I've been a member of this House for 60 years, and I can assure Lord Nolan, whoever he is, that I have never seen or heard of any member acting dishonourably in any way. I myself, on a basic salary of £40,000, have managed to afford a house in Salisbury worth several million pounds, not to mention my various yachts, my priceless paintings and other works of art. How dare anyone ask me how I got all this money? It is an outrageous intrusion on the privacy of an outstanding former Prime Minister, of impeachable integrity.

(Cheers of "Good old Grocer – first thing you've ever said that makes sense")

Madam Speaker: Order, order!

David Mellor (Oman South, Con.), **J. Aitken** (Dubai East, Con.) and others leap to their feet shouting in unison: "How many do you want? I got planes, I got tanks, I got missiles..."

(Laughter as Members leaf through prospectuses for top public schools)

Madam Speaker: I call Sir Jerry Wiggin.

Sir Jerry Wiggin (Great Crook, Con.): Madam Speaker, you have asked me to apologise to the House for being caught out. I unreservedly and humbly would like to suggest that I have done nothing wrong. And certainly not anything which the rest of you aren't just as guilty of. OK, so I used someone else's name on a order paper. But what I would ask the House, in all lack of humility, is which of them could put their hands on their wallets and honestly say that they wouldn't have done the same, if it was a matter of covering up their entirely legitimate backhanders from various industries?

(There are sobs from the backbenches as Tory MPs are moved to tears at the thought of having to give up their consultancies)

Wiggin: Would anyone care for a South African orange? I have several crates outside in the car park, thanks to my highly important fact-finding mission to that country on behalf of the Citrus Growers Association of Weston-super-Mare.

Madam Speaker: It's OK, Jerry, we've already forgotten all about it. The important thing is that we have, by the high quality of this debate, upheld the honour of this House.

(Huge cheers as MPs rush to celebrate their victory over Nolan by taking their "researchers" off for agreeable dinners in SW3)

That Vote In Full

For Snouts-In-Trough industry	*360*
Against Nolan	*everyone else*

Yes, it's the girl the Grauniad tried to gag!

GLENDA GREER JOINS THE EYE!!

Moore into the Guardian??!
He's the editor, stoopid!?
I reckon he's got as much brains as a kookaburra on Prozac!!!

WHY are the younger generation so rude? They have no manners and no respect!?

That Suzanne Moore, for example, with her bird's nest column and her fuck-me feminism?!?!

She's an even bigger tosser than little Rubbisher?!

And that's saying something!?

Doesn't she realize that I am the gal who put the Women's Movement on the map. When she was just a flabby little baby in her bird's nest nappies, sucking her fuck-me dummy?!?

Fuck me!!!?

THAT Suzanne Moore. Aren't-chasickofher??

With her bird's nest shoes and her fuck-me hair and her bloody great boobs hanging out all over the place, like a couple of koalas hanging off a eucey tree!?!!

I say this fat old slag doesn't know the difference between history and hysterectomy??!??

Let's have less of Suzanne, not more. Geddit? (Just Germaine's little joke!?)

THAT Alan Rusbridger. What a wanker!?!

With his bird's nest glasses and fuck-me sports jacket, he wouldn't put my piece attacking Suzanne

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THOSE

THATCHER MEMOIRS

IN FULL

Chapter 1: THE EARLY YEARS

Forget about the early years. Let's get on to that bastard Major.

Chapters 2-94: THAT BASTARD MAJOR

In my last book I may have mentioned the horrifying way in which, after 11 glorious years of the finest government this country has ever seen, I was viciously and cruelly betrayed by a gang of spineless wimps and Judases.

Yet the story did not end there. It has got worse. All that I worked for has been squandered and cast away by that dreadful little man with grey hair and glasses who once had the nerve to allow me to make him prime minister.

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LAUGHTER WITH THE YARDIES

CHESTER SQUARE SW1

Dear Bill,

I'm glad to hear you enjoyed my eightieth. My own memories of it are somewhat hazy, at least after midnight. Did Maurice really abseil down through the skylight to do his SAS Gorillagram or did I imagine that? I woke up in the Intensive Care at Torquay, the nearest emergency facilities for geriatrics to Downing Street, and the chief medico, a very agreeable Ghanaian, told me I had the constitution of a man of a hundred. He said I was very lucky not to be conscious for so much of the time: if I had been compos mentis when I played that silly prank with the fire extinguisher I would almost certainly be in prison.

I don't know whether you remember that story we used to have to read at school about the man who lived his life backwards? Dickens? Jeffrey Archer? No matter. Much the same thing is happening to poor Margaret. After hitting the jackpot with her first volume of old rope, she was persuaded to get her ghost train of dons, hacks, toadies etc, led by the impressively inebriate Professor Stone of Oxford, to recall for her her early years at Grantham.

This produced weeks of schoolgirlish giggling from the winos in the writing pool, but the results failed to impress little Mr Fishwick from Collins, who said it needed spicing up. Dr Stone pencilled in a few steamy scenes in the Quad at Somerville featuring Dame Daphne Park and the late Edith Sumerskill, but this was immediately blue-pencilled by the former Führer on the grounds that it might upset Lord Blake.

In the end they settled for a no-holds-barred butt in the stomach for little Major, details to be leaked to the Sunday Times to coincide with the pre-publication launch.

Stone accordingly tottered in with his tape-recorder and asked the Boss how she viewed recent developments. I knew this was a mistake and within moments I was upstairs rooting through the medicine chest for her box of Prozac. When I got back the little needle on Dr Branestawm's recorder was banging about in the red bit of the dial and the academic himself was reaching down into his briefcase for another bottle of electric soup.

"That pathetic little man. All thrown away. Stabbed in the back at the moment of victory ! See him toadying to that awful German, giving away our ancient liberties to the Hun!" Stone's bloodshot orbs focussed for a moment, and he leaned forward to interrupt her. "Prime Minister, might you consider a return if the nation called in its hour of need?"

"No, Norman, no," she replied, wiping her lips with the tablecloth as the Prozac began to do its deadly work. "My day is done. It will be for others to take up the sword from where I left it in the stone. Der Tag! Der Tag!" At this her eyelids flickered and she lost consciousness.

When this had been suitably edited, a draft was submitted to Friend Fishwick, who rubbed his hands, said he was sure Mr Murdoch would be delighted, and ordered another two hundred thousand copies to be printed on the strength of it.

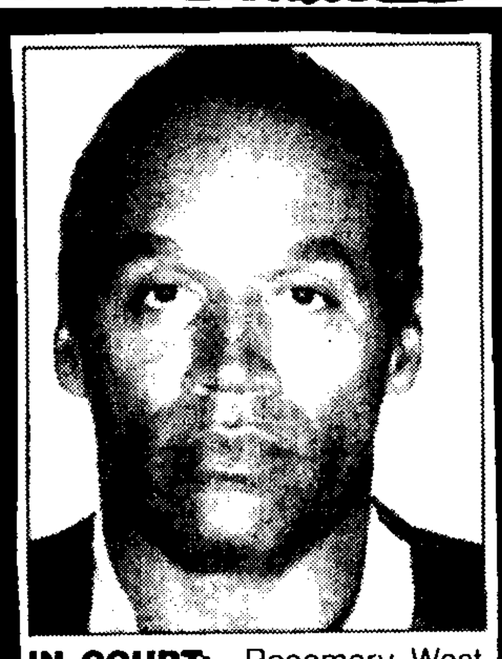
It was the next morning at breakfast, when she had a chance to read the press release, that she asked to speak to Dr Stone on the telephone. "Norman? Why did you let me say this? I must have been mad. Of course there's no question of throwing in the towel yet! Look at de Gaulle, look at Mitterrand! He carried on while they were measuring him for his coffin. Portillo is too young, Redwood is a fool. Lamont perhaps, but not yet. No, Norman, I shall be ready. Let the people know they have only to sound the trumpet and I shall emerge from my cave like Arthur of yore, the Once and Future Leader! Denis, go and open another bottle of my medicine. No buts, you will not be there to see me..."

Her latest wheeze to annoy Major is to lavish praise on Brother Blair, which will also annoy the smelly-socks no end.

Shall I see you at Huntercombe for Old Oystereyes' VJ Day Fancy Dress Match?

Yours octogenerically,

Denis

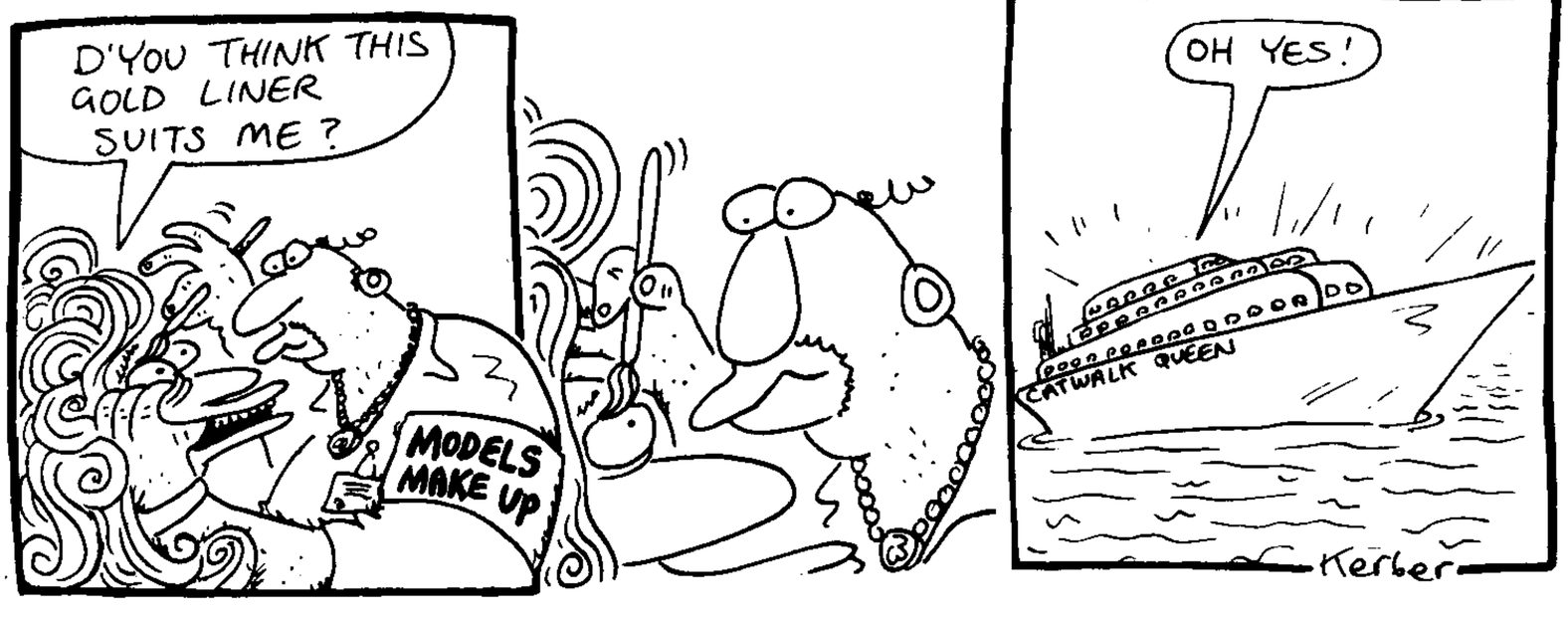


IN COURT: Rosemary West denies ten counts of murder.

Edinburgh Evening News

SUPERMODELS

Neil Kerber



DIARY

Paul Johnson: Wherever I go in the world, people stop me in the street, inform me that I'm the one Englishman they still trust, and ask me how we could have got rid of a great leader and replaced her with such a total nonentity. And I hang my head in shame. For I have no answer. How — *HOW* — could they have got rid of Margaret like that? Oh, my God! Have mercy on our souls! Lord, forgive them, for they know not what they do! I'm sorry — sob! — but I can't take it any more.

Sir Peregrine Worsthorne: Chin up, old chap. Borrow my hankie. Good big blow. And another. Wipe it all better. You're quite right. Paul. This present Prime Minister, whatsis name —

Lord Wyatt: Major.

Sir Peregrine Worsthorne: That's the one. Total disaster. He has no sense of history whatsoever. Not like me. The Battle of Hastings — 1066. Spanish Armada — 1588-ish, wasn't it? I'm pretty sure it was. Anyway — Major wouldn't have the foggiest. Not the foggiest. Battle of Bannockburn — 1415. He wouldn't know that. And he's a cad, too. I once sat in the Commons Press Gallery to watch him make an ass of himself at Prime Minister's Questions, and, do you know, he couldn't even be bothered to wave. Cut me dead.

Lord Wyatt: Tosh. John's by far our greatest Prime Minister since — ooh — since the Duke of Wellington. He's done fantastic things for the Tote, for instance, giving it real leadership. And under his premiership, the majority of ordinary decent people in this country are able to live in eight-bedroomed houses in Belgravia.

Kingsley Amis: Bah! I don't like all his Common Market claptrap. I went into a veg shop yesterday, and said "What the hell's that?' and do you know what the man replied? He said, ' 'Ere, Guv, gorblimey — that's an onion, lorluvaduck'. And it was! There are onions everywhere in veg shops these days — and it's all down to some bloody EEC directive. Good god — my wine bottle's finished. They don't make them as big as they used to. Bloody EEC.

Sir Peregrine Worsthorne: Incidentally, what a marvellous ear for the everyday nuances of ordinary people you possess, Kingsley. But there's no getting away from it, Major's a fool and a bounder, and this young fellow Blenkinsop —

Paul Johnson: Blair.

THE GRANDEES

Sir Peregrine Worsthorne: That's the one. Terry Blair. Frankly, I don't like the cut of his jib. Could you really bring yourself to vote for someone who admits to never having worn a bowler hat? I mean, really! And he was once dreadfully rude to me. We were in the same room together — The Wembley stadium, if memory serves — and I naturally assumed that he would do me the common courtesy of coming over and finding out my views on matters of national and international importance. Yet he never addressed a single word to me, even though we were easily within a hundred yards of one another, with nothing but riff-raff in between. Not one single word. Absolutely cut me dead. I'm sorry, but that's not my idea of how a future Prime Minister should behave.

Paul Johnson: But he's a true patriot, he says his prayers and he brushes his teeth. That's good enough for me. I've spoken to people in the know, and they say he's perfectly ready to step down in favour of Margaret Thatcher the day after he becomes Prime Minister. And as for that Major — I have it on the highest authority that since entering Number 10 he's twice been arrested for shoplifting women's underwear from leading stores, At least that's what the Tories who matter tell me.

Kingsley Amis: Ever since we got into this bloody Common so-called Market, my trousers have been far too tight, especially after lunch. And these damn collars too! No space for your neck! Typical frogs, trying to reduce the size of an Englishman's wardrobe. Bloody disgrace. This claret tastes a bit off. Bah! Someone forgot to put any scotch in it.

Lord Wyatt: But John Major's achievements are legion. He's single-handedly reduced the number of unprofitable patients clogging up our great hospitals. Whenever he goes abroad, he is greeted as an equal by the under-secretaries of state. His charismatic, no-nonsense approach has brought amazing material benefits to the decent working man. And I should know — I am that decent working man. Your prejudice against him is entirely based on class snobbery.

Paul Johnson: Rubbish! I know for certain from leading Tories that Major has been secretly diagnosed by leading physicians as a schizophrenic psychopath with paranoid tendencies towards hysteria and megalomania. When he can't force through a decision at cabinet level, he regularly draws out a pistol and opens fire. And his ignorance is as widespread as it is contemptible: he uses his fingers to count, always gets the 'r' in his own name the wrong way round and the book he took with him on his last visit to America was the second — and easiest — in the Ant and Bee series. All that, *and* his secret conviction last year on a charge of heroin smuggling — the fellow's a dolt and a brigand.

Lord Wyatt: That is not the view of the Governor of the Bank of England, Lord Weinstock, the 500 leading chairmen of British Industry, or the Queen.

Paul Johnson: Bah! How do you know?

Lord Wyatt: Because I tell them what to think.

Sir Peregrine Worsthorne: That's not what Lilibet told me last time she dropped round to help with the dishes. Anyway, Major sometimes wears grey socks. No gentleman ever wears grey socks. And rumour has it he didn't even go to public school — and I'm most certainly not being snobbish, Woodrow — just concerned.

Paul Johnson: I don't believe there can be anything fundamentally wrong with this country when four highly civilised people such as ourselves can enjoy a thoroughly good-natured and combative luncheon like this, bartering intellectual cut-and-thrust of the highest calibre over the table. But of course it wouldn't have been possible were it not for Margaret Thatcher, God bless her.

Kingsley Amis: Burp. The Frogs couldn't put on a lunch like this. No sense of humour. Nor could the Krauts. No sense of humour. And as for the Yanks — no sense of humour. Burp. The English are the only people who could fill a table with a gathering of intellectuals like us. We're the creme de la creme. Eh? Eh? Did I hear someone mention a large Creme de Menthe? Burp.

Board of the Faculty of Theology

To avoid clashes with Philosophy lectures members of the faculty are asked not to offer Theology lectures of interest

Institute of Social & Cultural Anthropology, Oxford

Because of the stairways, lover compartments are only open at one end and therefore will not suffer from people constantly passing on the way to the bar.

Today's Railways

St. Michael's Cheshire Home is part of the Leonard Cheshire Foundation, a charity offering choice and opportunity to people with disabilities.

We aim to give our 36 physically desirable residents maximum independence and privacy as well as every opportunity to lead stimulating lives.

Wells Journal

Literary Review

Pain in the Art

Art Objects: Essays On Ecstasy And Effrontery
Jeanette Winterson
Cape £9.99

HEY, you win some, you lose some. Julie Burchill may have turned lesbian but lookee here! Jeanette Winterson has evened things out. Yup, she finally met the right man. That's right. She did. And he's obviously some kind of guy because she really wants to tell us about him, whether he likes it or not (and apparently Art objects).

"Art coaxes out of us emotions we normally do not feel," she says. Yeah, you can just imagine it, can't you? Helluva guy, obviously. On the one hand, "Art cannot be tamed". A wild man, like. On the other, though, he's not without a bit of the old politeness. "Art always dresses for dinner," says Winterson respectfully.

But that's never really the nub of the matter, is it? On page 66, Winterson levels with us about what really drives her crazy about him. "Art is large," she says simply. You bet. Art has certainly enlarged her, she confesses. And what's more "Art takes time". The sensitive type with it! No wonder she's so mad about him.

Or could we be getting it all wrong? Surely not. She couldn't really be writing this dismal tosh about, you know, *art as in artists*, could she?

Oh yes, she bloody could. It's a mistake ever to put anything past Jeanette Winterson, as the world to its amazement has been discovering these past few years. Just when you thought she could go no further — having already chosen her own book as the book of the year, having already nominated herself as the world's greatest novelist — she'd go that extra mile and doorstep a reviewer who disagreed with her.

Meanwhile her novels have been getting worser and worser, as everybody knows. An avid fan in the *Grauniad* has now argued that "it is clever of her to have given the novels a rest for a bit, putting together this book of essays instead", thus contriving to praise her for not even pretending to deal with plot or character any more.

But all that's left is self-assertion in a vacuum. These ten short essays about different aspects of art, from her own book collection to Virginia Woolf, do not argue, describe or engage: they proclaim. In Jeanette Winterson's mind, the fact that Jeanette Winterson thinks it makes it true. And that's that.

Her most characteristic form of sentence is "I do this". "I wake and sleep language", she will say, or "I do not care about fashion, only about permanencies".

You seem to remember you've met this style before? You're

probably thinking of Molesworth, aren't you? "I diskard him utterly."

She does not supplement these imperial pronunciamentoes with anything as humdrum as observation either. She issues rules. Art does this, art does that. "Art objects to the fakeries of clock culture." Or alternatively *must* do this or that. "Art must resist autobiography..."

If there were any substance beneath this dicatorial manner, the book might still be worth reading. But actually what Jeanette has to say about art is of staggering banality, the stock-in-trade of any woolly old bookman circa 1910. She says you've got to look at pictures to understand them. She says she loves collecting first editions so much, she's got a "harem" of them. She says style is the thing for a writer...

So far from being novel, Winterson's pronouncements are so hoary that it's amazing anybody else thought them worth publishing. To Jeanette, of course, spinning round and round in her solipsistic universe, they probably seem new every morning.

Let's enjoy it while we can. Her fiction may be paltry but the creation she has made of herself is one of the great cultural phenomena of the late twentieth century: performance art at its best.

The best turn in *Art Objects* is undoubtedly a little message to the planet called "Art and Life". "How shall I live?" she asks, explaining that the question is addressed only to herself. So Jeanette tells Jeanette about Jeanette.

And we are privileged to overhear it all! We discover, for example, that Jeanette doesn't care for the tub. "I have to admit that I dislike baths, probably as a result of never having had one until I was fourteen. I would not like the reader to assume that I smell. I am fastidious if unbathed. It troubles me very little to live without conveniences, although my partner does insist on an inside toilet." Fascinating!

And she doesn't like radiators either, we learn with rapture. "Although there are clear differences between myself and D.H. Lawrence, I share with him the suspicion that there is something immoral about central heating." Of course there is!

After these riveting disclosures, she suddenly admits that, far aloft in the empyrean though she may be, she has heard that some people think she's a bit out of touch with ordinary life. Stupids! "There are people who tell me that I am cut off but to what are they connected? My connections are to the earth under my feet and the words that fill both hands. And not hands only, mouth, liver, gut, bowel, mind, blood, cunt." Yes, you read that aright. She's not cut off because she's got a privy store of verbiage where the sun don't shine: Marvellous!

Finally, she caps even this, as it were, with a long quote from Virginia Woolf, mystically forecasting that in a century or so in the future "the dead poet who was Shakespeare's sister will put on the body which she has so often laid down." Superbly, Winterson ends the essay with a single ringing declaration: "That is where I am in history."

So now we know the next phase of development for the life-form Winterson. It's always been pretty clear that she thought she was as good as Shakepeare. Now here's an outright statement that she believes that's actually who she is. You can keep your Bonaparte or your Jesus Christ, she's the Sweet Swan of Avon. Great days for us all, what? This one will run and run, until her warders catch her.

Books & Bookmen

☐ READERS of the *Financial Times*'s arts and books pages may wonder why on earth the novelist Ian McEwan is suddenly appearing in them so often.

Having seldom shown much interest in McEwan before, the *FT* ran a grovelling interview with him on 1 October 1994. Soon afterwards, billed as "one of our writers", he chose his Christmas books of the year. He then wrote a batty 1,300-word essay on "how to read history" (24 December 1994), followed by an equally incomprehensible piece on 7 January this year, and a massive review of the new Updike book in February.

All is explained. It was revealed last week that McEwan has for many months been enjoying Ugandan discussions with Ms Annalena McAfee — who happens to be arts and books editor of the *FT*!

■ THE Welsh literary establishment is pushing the claims of poet the Rev. R.S. Thomas for the Nobel Prize for Literature.

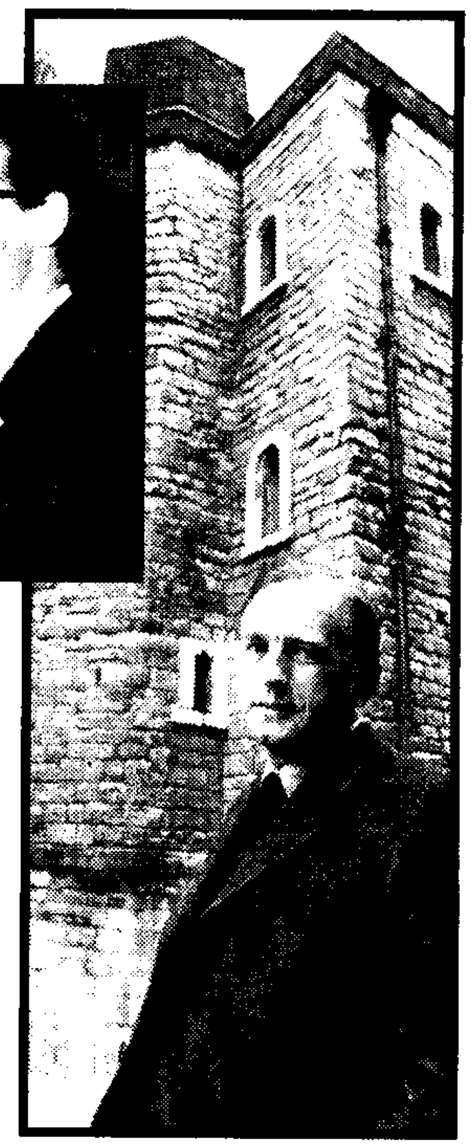
A campaign fronted by *The New Welsh Review*, a quarterly which collects £29,000 a year subsidy from the Arts Council of Wales, lauds the ageing cleric's verse but tactfully ignores his praise for fire bombers who in the past decade have incinerated more than 100 holiday homes in the name of preserving Welsh culture. Thomas had no hesitation in describing them as heroes when he took to the airwaves at the height of the torchings.

'Bookworm'

footnotes

COOPERS' SCOOPERS

NO SLEAZE HERE: David Miller (right) with Nolan commissioner Tom King MP.



RICH MAN IN CASTLE: Peter Burnham

IN HIS monumentally boring tome Privatisation, Public Ownership and the Regulation of Natural Monopolies (Blackwells 1992) Sir Christopher Foster, senior partner in Coopers & Lybrand, set out his dream: that accountants should take power over all business undertakings.

His dream is coming true faster than he could have imagined. Not only is he himself deputy chairman of Railtrack, which will run the privatised railway, but two distinguished Coopers & Lybrand products are poised to take over powerful positions in the most powerful of all the newly-created quangos. The Environment Agency for England and Wales will take over and combine the enormous functions of the National Rivers Authority, the local waste regulation authorities and the government's pollution inspectorate.

An advisory committee has been appointed to usher in the new quango and eventually to run it. Its chairman is the Fourth Baron de Ramsey, a wealthy Tory landowner from John Major's Huntingdon constituency, and a part-time director of the local water company, who cites his hobbies in the appropriate order as golf, fishing and fine arts. It is not expected that the fourth Baron will play an excessively energetic role in the management of the agency. Most of the mundane work is likely to fall on the shoulders of the chairman of the finance committee, Peter Burnham, a senior partner in Coopers & Lybrand. One of Mr Burnham's most urgent jobs was to employ what the department of environment calls "a suitably qualified person to assist the committee's Secretariat on financial matters". Mr Burnham chaired a panel of four which interviewed likely candidates for this post. He was faced at once with one of those nasty little awkwardnesses which keeps clogging up the work of the quangos. A likely name on the shortlist was David Miller. Mr Miller is Mr Burnham's former colleague, friend and fellow partner at Coopers & Lybrand. Naturally, as the department of the environment stress, Mr Burnham couldn't take the chair when his colleague was being interviewed. Naturally, the final selection was made "without Mr Burnham's involvement". The department told the *Eye*: "Mr Burnham's previous connection with Mr Miller and the process of selection were declared to a full meeting of the advisory committee and minuted at Mr Burnham's request". No doubt you've guessed the name of the lucky candidate who got the job: David Miller. As a result, Coopers & Lybrand have provided not just the finance chairman of the new quango's advisory committee — but its consultant as well.

DE RAMSEY: 4th Baron and 1st chairman

In March, the month Miller was appointed, the quango's advisory committee invited an accountancy firm to give a presentation of the "pitfalls and problems encountered in previous mergers of different organisations". I expect you've guessed the name of the firm they invited: Coopers & Lybrand. The Department tells the *Eye*: "No other firms were invited... No payment was made for the presentation. And it was made clear to the firm that their participation would not affect either way their prospects of receiving or being invited to tender for subsequent commissions". The presentation, by all accounts, went very well, and *Eye* readers will be kept fully informed of the relationship between the quango and the accountancy firm as it continues to blossom.

SLEAZE STREET • SLEAZE STREET • SLEAZE STREET

Powell Jewels

■ ONE MP WHOLLY unembarrassed by the anti-sleaze strictures of the Nolan Commission is William Powell, a garrulous Tory barrister who sits for Corby. *Eye* readers will recall our revelations last year that Mr Powell was the lucky recipient of monthly cheques from a London pressure group for the oil sheikhdoms called the Gulf Centre for Strategic Studies.

Powell refused to answer questions from the *Eye* as to why he did not declare these payments, which amounted last year to several thousand pounds. He told the Daily Mail that the money from the GCSS was covered by his declaration of "occasional income from journalism". This was utter nonsense. The GCSS income was not occasional — it was regular; and it was plainly unconnected to the very occasional (and fourth-rate) articles which Mr Powell wrote for the GCSS journal. But when he came to make his entry in the 1995 *Register*, Powell still failed to mention the Gulf Centre for Strategic Studies.

Powell's links with the Centre are still strong. In the last week of May he went to Bahrein, where he addressed a glamorous conference organised by the Gulf Centre for Strategic Studies. Powell loves Bahrein and its tyrannical Emir, who, with the help of the British head of the Bahreini secret service, Ian Henderson, is energetically locking up anyone who dares to organise petitions in favour of a democratic constitution. Last March, as the *Eye* reported, Powell was in Bahrein again for four lovely days in top hotels as a guest of the Emir. He has just declared this visit in the Register, adding that he received from the Emir "a gift of jewellery". What jewellery? The good people of Corby might want to know. Perhaps they can get an answer from their MP — the *Eye* can't.

Would you buy a new cut-price car from this man?

■ JOHN CARLISLE, Tory MP for Luton North, the former friend of white South Africa, has entered a new dimension of parliamentary sleaze. Not only is he, as he declares, a director of Bletchley Motors Group, a prominent car dealer in Milton Keynes.

He also assists the firm to flog cars to fellow MPs at reduced prices. BMG's brochure for "members of both Houses of Parliament, their families and their staff" offers the latest Rover 400 (retail price £12,800) at £10,965. An M Reg Peugeot 106, retailing at £9,493, is a snip for MPs at £6,295.

"If you require any additional information" says the brochure "contact or telephone Ian Button — or John Carlisle MP at the House. They will be happy to arrange a demonstration in London or at your home".

TECMATE

■ THE LOVELY Lee Wood hotel at Buxton, Derbyshire is often used for training and other purposes by the Stockport Training and Enterprise Council, a quango set up in 1991. Commons questions by Labour MP Andrew Bennett established that the Lee Wood has been used twelve times by the TEC at a cost to the taxpayer of £7,594.45. Anyone who wonders why a hotel in Buxton should be chosen for such regular use by a TEC in Stockport should know that the hotel owner, Mr John Millican, is a director of Stockport TEC.

FREE MICHAEL HICKEY

THE CRUEL vendetta waged by Home Secretary Michael Howard against Michael Hickey, who was wrongly jailed in 1979 for the murder of newspaper boy Carl Bridgewater, has degenerated into reckless breach of the rule of law which Howard boasts he stands for.

Michael Hickey, who was 16 at the time of the murder, was "detained on Her Majesty's Pleasure." The judge, Mr Justice Drake, who announces his retirement this week, wrote to the Home Secretary with a "tariff" — a recommended sentence — fifteen years. The European Commission on Human Rights insists that prisoners can only be kept inside after their tariff if they are a danger to the public.

So in December 1993, when Michael had been inside for fifteen years, his lawyers went to court to demand his release. The Home Office argued that Michael could not be released because he was not held in prison — but in a secure mental hospital. Michael's lawyers agreed that his mental health should be assessed at a tribunal. The Home Office lawyers then promised that if Michael was well enough to go back to prison, his case would go immediately to the Parole Board.

On 5th September last year a tribunal under Judge David found unanimously that Michael was well enough to be discharged from hospital. If the Home Office had been true to its word, he should have gone straight to prison, and his case straight to the Parole Board.

Instead, he was not moved to Gartree prison until 19th December —15 weeks after the tribunal. Five weeks later still he was handed an unsigned memorandum blandly informing him that his first formal review by the Parole Board would not take place until November this year — two years after he had served the full tariff recommended by Mr Justice Drake.

Michael's lawyers have now written to Howard giving him two weeks to refer the case to the Parole Board — or face another judicial review.

● At midday, on June 8, two years after new evidence was handed in which points inexorably to the innocence of Michael and the two men convicted with him, hundreds of their supporters will be protesting outside the Home Office.

Everything you always wanted to know about LEX

(but were too afraid to ask)

QUESTION: When do the words "no contracts" mean "an awful lot of contracts which we are bloody well not going to tell you about"? Answer: When they appear in an official statement from the Post Office.

Almost a year ago, the Eye asked the Post Office whether they had any contracts with the Lex Service Group, whose board was joined in 1993 by the Post Office chief executive "Wild" Bill Cockburn. The unequivocal answer was: "no contracts". This has intrigued *Eye* readers ever since, and information pours in about very substantial contracts between Lex subsidiaries and the Post Office. The *Eye* has heard recently, for instance, of:

- A contract worth £121,000 with Lex Commercials which rents trucks and vans from Halesowen.
- A contract worth £101,000 with Lex Transfleet, which hires out trucks from Coventry.
- A contract worth £76,000 with Lex Harvey which hires out fork-lift trucks from Bedworth.

The *Eye* calculates the annual value of these Midlands contracts is about half a million pounds.

The Eye also has new information which casts doubts on an answer given last year by Sir Michael Heron, chairman of the Post Office, to Peter Hain MP. Prompted by the *Eye's* disclosures, Hain asked about a bid made by a subsidiary of Lex, Arlington Motors, to run an engineering depot for the Post Office in North London. Heron replied: "A subsidiary of Lex Arlington Motors of Enfield provided a benchmark against which to compare internal costs". This, the *Eye* discovers, is slightly economical with the truth. Arlington did indeed bid to run the depot, but their bid was much higher than the in-house bid from the Post Office. Nevertheless, it went to the high-powered MAPEC committee, on which sits chief executive Cockburn. Negotiations were started up again with Arlington in an attempt to reduce their price — but the reduced price was still too high.

On May 11, the *Eye* asked the Post Office the following questions. Is the Post Office trading with Lex companies? If so, to what extent — is our figure of half a million for the Midlands excessive? Is it wise for the Post Office to trade with a company on whose board sits their chief executive? Does this not lead to potential conflicts for Post Office buyers? Does Mr Cockburn declare his interest every time a contractual arrangement is entered into with any Lex company? Does the Post Office still say that the Arlington quotation for the London depot was simply a benchmark for the in-house price — and if so were Arlington paid to provide it?

The reply came twelve days later. It should be studied carefully by old-fashioned people who believe that public corporations have a duty to provide answers to fair questions, fairly presented.

"As you know, I was in correspondence with you nearly a year back going over the same ground and I am disappointed that you seem not prepared to take the word of the Post Office, leaning instead towards a mish-mash of fiction and groundless innuendo.

"Our business dealings with Arlington are a commercial confidence, and I ask you to respect that — not because the Post Office has anything to hide but that is a basis of trust in which we deal with all our customers and suppliers. The Post Office, as I have told you before, has one of the best track records in the country for having well-established checks and safety mechanisms to ensure fair and honest dealing in the handling of contracts and tenders. And I emphasise again that the Post Office does not consider there is a conflict of interest with Mr Cockburn having a non-executive seat on the board of Lex. The appointment was with the approval of the chairman and the DTI, and has been public knowledge from the outset. I am sorry you are having trouble trying to make fact out of fiction, but we are quite clear where we stand and will not be commenting further".

FREEDOM TO DECEIVE: Heron and Cockburn

Guards of Honour

■ **Former Minister Allan Stewart has pleaded not guilty by letter to causing breach of the peace over his confrontation with anti-road protestors. He has not seen the inside of a police station. The protestors have not been treated so gently.**

Strathclyde police arrest them and lock them up overnight even if they are not charged. In court, the police usually rely on the words of security guards. In a recent case at Paisley Sheriff Court, Mark Ewing of Securiguard said roads protestor Colin Mcleod "broke through a cordon and grabbed me by the throat". This evidence was slightly tarnished when another guard, William Lang, said Ewing had boasted he'd "made the whole thing up". Colin Mcleod was promptly acquitted.

PS. Labour MP Harry Cohen discovers that £705,000 of taxpayers' money has been lobbed into one small detective agency, Brays of Southampton, for spying on road protestors.

ASSAT – NO ASSETS.

■ THE AWFUL NEWS, broken in the last *Eye*, that the prestigious Chartered Association of Certified Accountants (ACCA) has lost half its funds and reserves in three years will be grimly familiar to the authorities at the Association of Accounting Technicians (ASSAT).

The Association, which specialises in helping school leavers to become responsible accountants, lost over half a million pounds last year. Its building in Clerkenwell has been overvalued. If it was shown in the books at its real market value, the association would be almost insolvent.

You can write to Paul Foot at 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG, or leave a message for him on 0171 287 3183

In the City

GIBBS MEW is an expanding West Country family brewer whose fortunes have greatly improved since the management takeover three years ago by the Hedderson brothers Tom and John.

The Heddersons arrived at Gibbs Mew via a £2 million-plus takeover of the UK D drinks distribution business. Since that deal the Heddersons have built up both the Gibbs Mew business by way of further takeovers and their own stake in the group which was formerly controlled by the Gibbs family.

At the time of the UK D deal attention was rightly focused on the Heddersons, who had previously created the successful Canonbury Wine business which they sold to brewers Devenish in 1988. No attention was paid to their partners in UK D, whose UK Distributors part of the group provided 85 percent of the £6 million turnover.

This was perhaps not altogether surprising as UK Distributors was owned and run by members of the Reilly family — some of whose members, though not those involved in UK Distributors, form one of the leading criminal "crews" in north London.

This fact — together with the undoubted reputation of the Heddersons, who have no involvement with criminal activities — may well explain at least in part the way in which the Reilly vendors have been distanced from Gibbs Mew since the deal was done.

UK Distributors was established in 1984 by Matthew and Albert Reilly — neither of whom has a criminal record or is linked by Scotland Yard sources to the activities of other family members. Only Matthew Reilly retained any connection with the business after the takeover, becoming managing director of UK D while remaining in charge of UK Distributors. He alone received Gibbs Mew shares — sharing a total of 600,000 at 180p each with John Hedderson, whose UK Drinks business was part of the UK D deal. As UK D hit its profit targets the two men later shared an additional allotment of 300,000 shares, also at 180p. Gibbs Mew shares are now 414p.

Albert Reilly and his wife received £750,000 in Gibbs Mew loan notes for their share of the business. These were to be repaid from 1993 and were in fact repaid in May last year. Matthew Reilly and his wife received £500,000 in loan notes. These are due to be repaid from September this year.

Matthew Reilly entered into a two-year service contract with Gibbs Mew. He resigned his directorships in March last year. At that time he had just under 5 percent of Gibbs Mew — 300,000 shares.

The UK D business was the supply of drinks from warehouses in north London and Luton — the latter owned by the two Reillys with the Heddersons and leased to the company until last year. Often UK Distributors supplied club and pub customers who other suppliers would not reach. One reason was the risk of bad debts — a notorious problem in the booze business. The Reilly business, however, had somewhat less of a problem collecting from those to whom it supplied.

Other members of the Reilly family and their associates have interests in a number of private clubs and pubs in north London, particularly in the Holloway area. These interests have often lead to clashes with the main "firm" in north London run by brothers Patsy, Tommy and Terry Adams — a group seen as not only bad but mad by not just the police but those in the London underworld who know and fear them.

The Adams brothers, who started out in Islington, have arrest records for firearms and drugs offences but have so far avoided any successful prosecution despite being of continued interest to both customs and excise and Scotland Yard's clubs squad because of their substantial network of nightclub interests which has expanded out from Islington to Soho and Chelsea.

The most celebrated example of the Reilly-Adams rivalry occurred around new year 1990 and was sparked by a dispute involving George Reilly, the "heaviest" family member who received a long prison sentence for bank robbery in 1976. After George, for once unarmed, had been confronted and insulted in the street by an Adams associate, he returned ready to rock 'n roll, forcing his quarry to take refuge on a shop roof from the pursuing bullets.

Once news of this massive, public disrespect reached the Adams camp they came looking for their rivals at one of their Islington pubs. Learning of this four members of the Reilly "crew" sped to the pub in a BMW only to find the Adams gang in two cars waiting in an ambush. In the ensuing gun battle at least eight shots were fired before the BMW beat a hasty retreat.

Subsequent police inquiries met the usual wall of silence from both sides. However, the police did arrest club owner John Reilly who subsequently pleaded guilty to violent disorder in December 1990 and was jailed for two years.

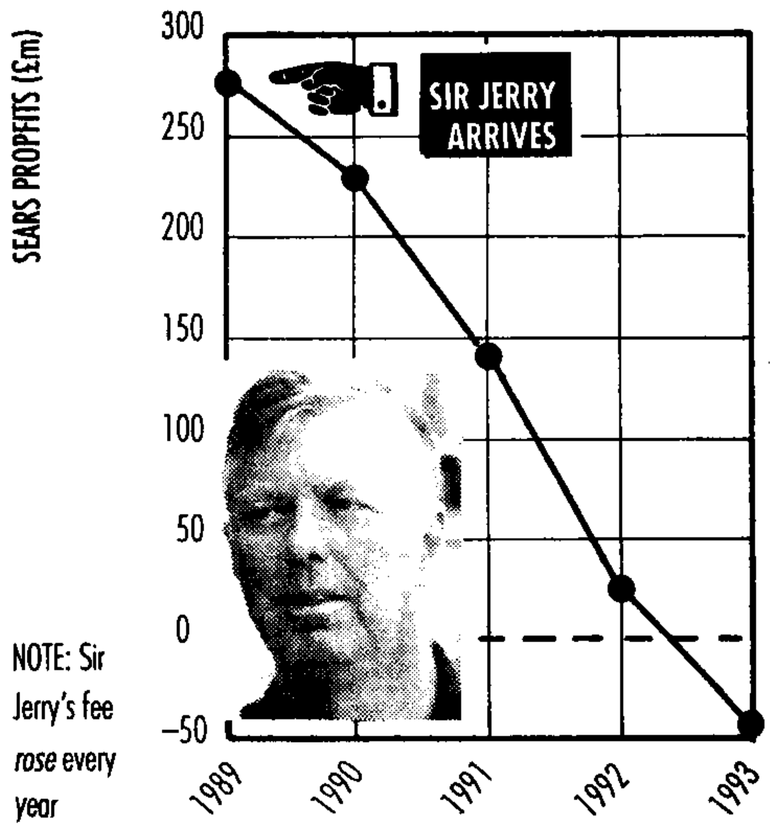
Doubtless with the departure of Matthew Reilly and the upcoming final repayment of the loan notes, there is or will be little or no connection any longer between any member of the Reilly family, even the law abiding Albert and Matthew, and Gibbs Mew to whose directors, especially the Heddersons, this background of events was both totally unknown and absolutely unwelcome.

THE City is waiting with great interest to see which of the great and the good will have starring roles as witnesses in the Maxwell trial. Will perhaps we be hearing from that friend of the famous Sir Michael Richardson, a longtime ally of the late Robert Maxwell, whose life and "alleged" crimes will no doubt occupy much of the next six months? Or Mirror Group chairman Sir Robert Clark? Prominent Labour peers Lords Callaghan and Donoughue? There are even suggestions that figures from the spook world (Mossad department) may put in an appearance.

IT SEEMS all is far from well in the finances of community servant Roger Levitt. The cigar sporting conman is said to be bemoaning his cash flow problems. Certainly there seem to be a number of unhappy campers at his International Boxing Corporation venture. So much so that Roger the Dodger is said to be talking of moving his boxing operations to the United States. A sad loss.

How Consultancy Works. Part 1.

SIR JERRY WIGGIN, consultant to Sears plc (among others)



NOTE: Sir Jerry's fee *rose* every year

Sears profits			
1989	£273m	1991	£147m
1990	£231m	1992	£23m
		1993	–£47m

THE failure of the Serious Farce Office and the Bank of England to obtain a full and frank confession of his activities from Barings trader Nick Leeson is not that surprising given the price.

Leeson wants to use his story to parlay his way home from Frankfurt jail. It is the only card he has that might just prevent him enjoying the comforts of Changi prison for several years once extradition is granted by the German authorities. That means persuading the SFO to request his export to London instead. No request, no information seems to be the Leeson pitch.

But the SFO is rightly concerned about Leeson changing his mind about any deal once he is safe from the Singaporeans. Given that its fragile fortunes may be hanging by the Maxwell thread, the SFO would not want a Leeson fiasco-prosecution collapse due to legal loopholes over actions committed abroad after much expense of legal aid.

As for the Bank of England supervisory board, it may figure that Leeson may not tell all the truth and what he has to say, that cannot be discovered from others, may not be worth that much — especially as all those above him are now Barings and probably banking history. Anyway, it is all likely to come out either in Frankfurt or Singapore when Leeson has to sing his song.

Meanwhile it might be worth wondering just how the bankrupt Leeson is managing to afford the expensive services of the estimable Kingsley Napley to fund the extradition battle?

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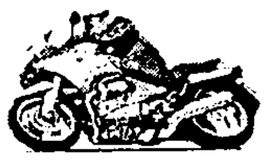

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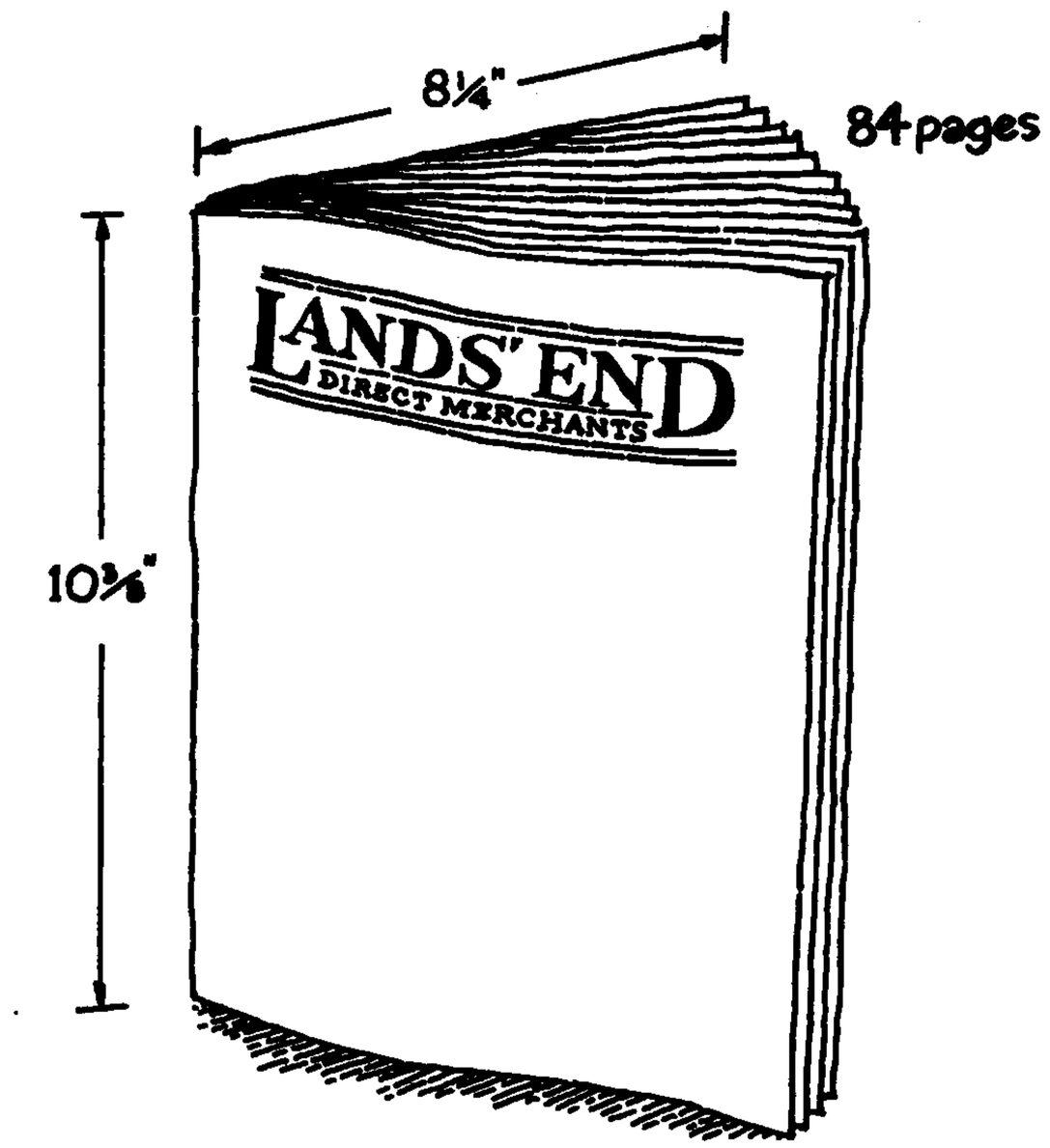

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SULTRY SOLVENT SOURPUSS seeks unhitched happy hunk for mutually uplifting, lasting experience — 35-45. Photo essential. Oxon/Northants. Box 4472.

TALL GRADUATE CHAP, 28, seeks unattached woman 25-35 for days out, beers, holidays and shared silliness, plus all the usual other stuff (arguments, companionship, insensitivity, hugs). Long letter appreciated. Hampshire. Box 3073.

EASY-GOING MALE, 31, adventurous, articulate, non-judgemental, temporarily dispirited, seeks special lady under 45 to treat him to an evening out in London. Status etc etc unimportant. Box 3173.

LIVELY LADY (34) seeks tall successful outgoing chap (32-42) for going out. Sense of fun and ability to make me laugh essential. SW London. Box 1773.

LIAM NEESON seeks Helen Mirren. Own list of suspects. Box 1873.

TALL, SLIM, DARK 39 year-old prisoner seeks kind, sharing pen-friend. Write: Junior Clarke, Adult Correctional Centre, 2-4 Tower Street, Raytown, Kingston, Jamaica.

BLACK BRITISH/AMERICAN female lawyer, 30, seeks professional SWM who's not afraid to try something sweet! London. Photo appreciated. Box 1973.

ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER (not), 27, seeks Pamela Anderson (maybe). Box 2073.

PLUMP PEACH, pretty 50s, seeks good gardener, any age, for nurture, happy harvests. Thames Valley. Box 2173.

ORDINARILY adventurous attached man, 44, seeks straightforward self-confident woman for discreet uncomplicated affair, perhaps lasting friendship. E. Anglia. Box 2273.

GOOD LOOKING Hampshire man (35) seeks mature woman for discreet, spine-shattering dalliance. Box 2373.

CARING professional single man, 35, needing slim wicked lady for fun 'n' frolics. Wales/SW. Photos? Box 3972.

HELICOPTER PILOT, 38, Abu Dhabi. Working hard, playing harder. Articulate, athletic, ambitious, adventurous. Sunny disposition. Barmy about boats, tennis, golf. Bikini lifestyle in business world. Join surfing safari with me! Box 3772.

SHY, ATTRACTIVE bachelor, mid 30s, seeks well-built lady for romantic capers. East Anglia/anywhere. Box 3872.

OBLIGATORY Eye-catcher. What: One year overland African adventure. Me: Male, providing well-equipped expeditionary vehicle, brilliant, 34, paying full vehicle and fuel costs. You: Female, more than bright, non-smoker, willing to occasionally help dig vehicle out of the sand and mud, eager, serious. When: Trip starts late August. So: CV, photo (if you think it makes any difference). Telephone number to Box 2573.

SCORPIO MALE, 38, professional, who has avoided "settling down" like the plague, is currently reconsidering his options. Life is good, but excellent would be better. Would like to meet a highly compatible female for some determined, seriously enjoyable, mutual life improvement. A positive attitude, good sense of humour and sexual chemistry (looks and more) are important. Non-smoker. South-East. Send a brief letter and a photo and I promise to reply. Box 2673.

GOOD-LOOKING tall upper-class guy, 38, seeks beautiful wild child to show him what he's missing. ONO. Box 2773.

SEXY MARRIED MAN, 40, seeks sexy married woman for sex. Essex, Kent. Box 2873.

RENT-FREE accommodation in house in beautiful countryside (Midlands) for slim 40s lady in return for a little driving and amusement. Box 2973.

FIT, FAIR (45) male, affectionate, caring, sensuous. Seeks dusky maiden to wine and dine (and more). London area. Photo please. Box 4072.

MAGICIAN AND MYSTIC MALE, intelligent, attractive, romantic, sensuous, intuitive, humorous, cultured, 30s, 5'8", seeks witch-maiden (probably 20s) for exalted passion, deep intimacy, heroic love. ALAWP. Esoteric interests essential. Box 4371.

ATTRACTIVE continental lady, early 50s, loosely attached, seeks n/s active professional gentleman to rediscover love and companionship. 5'10" plus, 53-63. Kent/S.London area. Box 2772.

SUCCESSFUL early 20s male seeks similar talented female for exotic adventure, maybe life. Box 1473.

MALE 25, computer science student, seeks attractive, intelligent female. Cambridge/London. Box 1573.

AMUSING, ATTRACTIVE, sensuous, tall Bath man, 40, seeks fun-loving woman to thoroughly spoil and pamper. Summer is just around the corner, so why not have some delicious enjoyable times with a man who really knows how to please. Just write to me with your telephone number to Box 1673.

PROFESSIONAL (45) very solvent, stylish, intelligent, wants to pamper lady under 30 during discreet affair. Box 3273.

FAT, BALDING MALE, 40s, seeks female for gentle friendship/disgraceful things! Your age/appearance irrelevant. Correspond first, please. Box 3373.

LONDON PROFESSIONAL man (44), unattached, seeks sensuous slim attractive woman for steamy unpossessive relationship. Phone 0181 444 8950.

VIVACIOUS, intelligent, warm, independent, energetic lady 46, 5'10", happily separated, enjoys country living and cafe society, finding life too quiet at the moment seeks lively-minded solvent appreciative man, Midlands area. Box 3473.

OVERWORKED, unpretentious, tall, good-looking successful photographer (29), studio in Central London, into arts, films and music, seeks similar female for companionship, maybe modelling and definitely sharing. Photo appreciated. Box 3573.

ADVENTURER seeks adventuress for uninhabited uncomplicated relationship and occasional walks on the wild side. I am 42, healthy, wealthy, witty, sensual, sometimes wise and enjoy life to the full. Box 3673.

THOSE WHO restrain desire do so because theirs is weak enough to be restrained...Beautiful, intelligent young man wanted (London). Box 3773.

INTELLIGENT, happy, financially sound but discontented single man, 44, seeks friendship, love and sex — preferably with the same woman. N/S, N.West. Box 3873.

ARE YOU READY, successful, unattached, breathtakingly attractive and living in South Wales? Yes? Cute, professional lady, 35, would love to hear from you. Box 3973.

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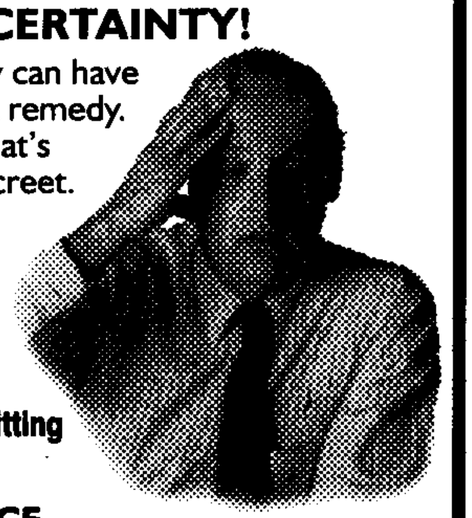

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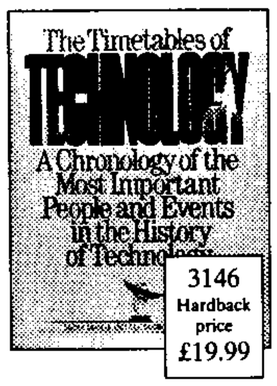
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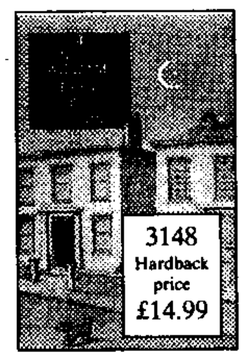

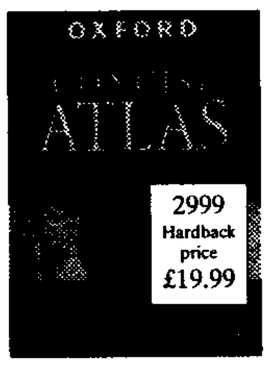

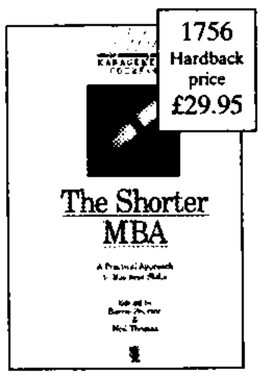

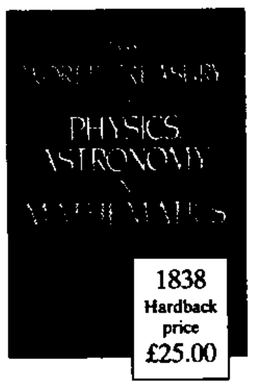

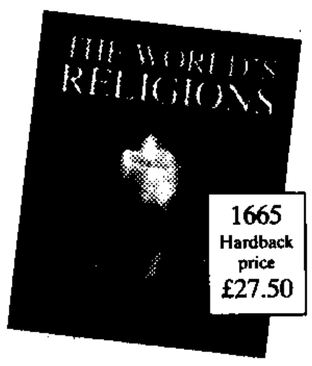

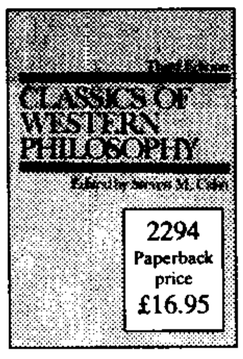

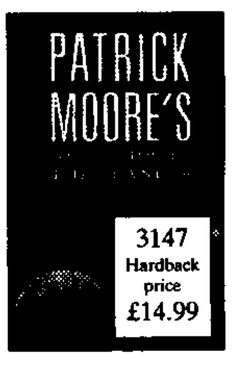

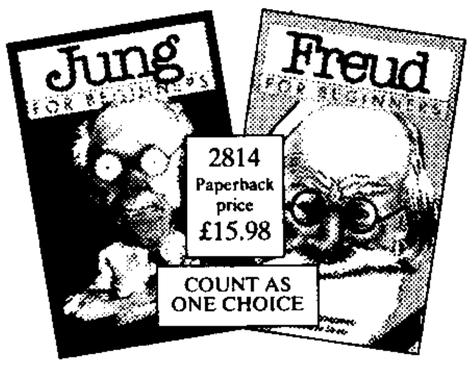

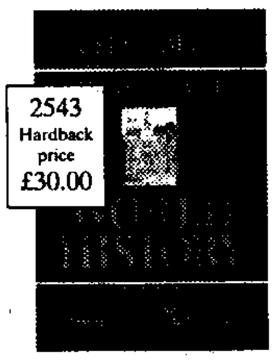

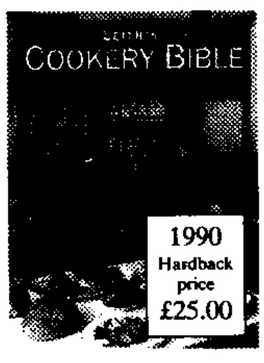

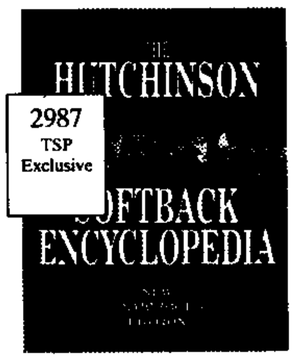

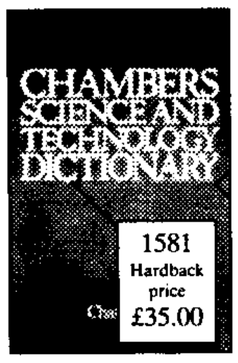

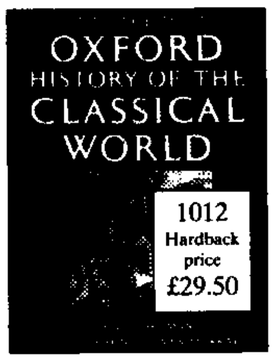

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